National acclaim for our chapter’s Add-Up

The Sierra Club’s “Add-Up” portion of its website is a dynamic, user-friendly tool for effective actions and issues.

National just came out with the top three “Most Active Chapters of 2017” using this tool most effectively. We’re in the top three, just behind the Rocky Mountains and Michigan chapters, giving Santa Barbara Group’s Katie Davis great praise.

Locally, we know her well, now all chapters nationally know what we know. Here’s what’s been going on in our chapters throughout America:

“The whenever one woman digital super-volunteer Katie Davis fired up her computer on behalf of Los Padres Chapter last solar City would triple their order for future solar offshore oil rigs would get stuck trying to leave the harbor.”

“This whenever Katie pulled the Add-Up campaign management homepage from her bookmarks. Santa Barbara County would scrabble to write “NO!” on applications for new oil drills, and city councilmembers would scramble out of their kids’ basketball games in order to finish their plans for transitioning to 100% clean energy.”

“This whenever Katie hit “Publish” on her latest Add-Up campaign 2017, Ryan Zinke would grimace, knowing the unwelcome reception he’d get in Santa Barbara when he flew down to visit the in-laws, reminisce at the history of oil spills in the Santa Barbara Channel, and miss most of his partner’s annual appearance at the American Petroleum Institute Lobbyist-Lawmaker scramble. Thanks, for all your great work, Katie!”

For anyone reading this, you too can get involved, go to: www.SierraClub.org

Our agenda for 2018

By Jim Hines

LP Chapter Chair

Happy New Year to all you members and friends, hope you can get out in the outdoors more often.

We are starting off 2018 with some major challenges to our environment in our regions, Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Here’s what we’re in for, hope you can help:

Major new offshore oil leasing is being geared up for by the Dept. of the Interior.

The proposed Mission Rock Energy Project along the Santa Clara River south of Santa Paula begins the process with local hearings by the CA Energy Commission and we have not yet put the Mainland Peaker Plant (Puente) completely to rest.

There are proposals to slash funding in a major way for the Los Padres National Forest which will cut staff and reduce the number of visitor-serving offices as well as trail maintenance. This comes at a time of great need to recover our lands from the Thomas Fire.

Our work to protect the Simi Hills, Santa Susana and Santa Monica Mountains will continue in conjunction with the Angeles chapter.

I will lobby Congress for passage of two of our legislative priorities 1) expanding Los Padres wilderness via the Central Coast Heritage Protection Act and 2) Rim of the Valley Corridor Protection Act.

Two threats to open space in the Santa Ynez Valley will require our attention.

Our work on the Santa Clara and Ventura rivers will move forward in a positive way.

These and other challenges which will pop up will keep our chapter leadership and our many activists very busy in 2018.

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And don’t forget 2018 is a very important election year.

Editor’s note: As the Gaviota Coast Conservancy said, this is “a stunning development”. While all of us (Los Padres Chapter Sierra Club) who are part of the GCC are ecstatic, the amount of public access is not yet known. This comes on the heels of our report in our last issue of 56 coastal acres possibly being added to Jalama County Park, and this land is adjacent.

The Nature Conservancy has announced that it has acquired the 24,364-acre Cojo-Jalama Ranch (AKA Bixby Ranch) that surrounds Point Conception extending from Jalama Point to near the western boundary of Hollister Ranch.

Ownership of the Conservancy eliminates threats of the conversion of this historic property for residential development, oil extraction or mineral development.

“It’s the Crowning Jewel of the Gaviota Coast!” exclaimed Gaviota Coast Conservancy President Michael S. Brown. “Preservation of the Cojo-Jalama Ranch has long been one of the GCC’s leading goals. It is the largest privately-owned ranch on the Gaviota Coast, and has faced significant development threats in the past.”

The purchase was made possible by a single donation of $165,000,000 by Jack and Laura Dangermond, whose company played a major role in developing GIS methodologies.

“The generosity of people like the Dangermonds have played a major role in developing GIS methodologies. The generosity of people like the Dangermonds have played a major role in preserving the Cojo-Jalama Ranch and other threatened coastal lands. We applaud their vision and generosity and invite others to support GCC’s ongoing work to protect our precious coastline,” said Phil McKenna, GCC board member and past-president.

The Gaviota Coast spans 76 miles of coastline from Coal Oil Point in Goleta to Point Sal west of Santa Maria. The area was studied to be a National Seashore in the early 2000s, but the National Park Service found that while the visual, biological and recreational resources it made suitable as a National Seashore, it is also home to the George W. Bush Administration and landowners made it infeasible.

The 2004 Report suggested local leaders make it a priority, but note major success via the Coast Guard, Nat’l Park Service, and others.

Our popular WBC course for 2018 starts Feb. 7 - March 28, and it may be sold out by the time you get this issue, but you should check it out (524-7170) immediately or go here: www.SierraClub.org

For anyone reading this, you too can get involved, go to: www.SierraClub.org
Jan 23: WBC Feature posted with 10 pictures on the Ventura County Star website. It was in the print edition on Jan 4, cover in Time Out. Read Alicia Doyle’s story here: https://tinyurl.com/WBCinVCStar

Jan 23: Sustainable VC hearing at Board of Supervisors re General Plan to ensure climate and environmental justice are addressed. Sierra Club members involved, for background go to: www.vc2040.org/documents

Jan 20: Women’s March anniversary was HUGE yet again at major cities, and huge in Santa Barbara (De la Guerra Plaza est 3,500) and Ventura’s Plaza Park (est 1,500). Sierra Club members rallies. there was evidence at both events, as were environmental signs such as “Let the Forest Be with You.” Justice for All organized the march, a key component of the club’s ethic, and a Women’s March committee handled the Santa Barbara event to create “transformative social change.”

Jan 9: “Islands Apart: A Year on the Edge of Civilization” was the headline for an article by our Los Padres Chapter Chair Jim Hines regarding a recent visit to the Channel Islands. Pacific Sierran version was printed in the Dec/Jan Condor Call. The Sierran also printed his articles on opposing national park entrance fees and another topic of commenting on the Channel Islands. “The Path Forward,” the Sierra Club newsletter, referring to the Trump Administration’s assault on parks, monuments, etc. and a Women’s March on behalf of the Cal/Neva Wildlife team.

Dec 8: Photos & Potluck gathering by the Conejo Group in Thousand Oaks where participants shared culinary talents and photo adventures.

Dec 7: Fire help from National Sierra Club offered after LP Chapter Chair Jim Hines informed Bow and Arrow Chapter of Thomas Fire’s devastating effects on our region re fundraising and recovery efforts.

Dec 5: Goleta Renewing, voted to adopt a 100 percent renewable energy goal by 2030 (Santa Barbara has already signed). Alex Pujols of the SB Group was interviewed by UniVision.

Dec 2: Environmental mini-park and opportunity presented by the SB Chapter allowed volunteers to build a new native plant trail mini-park near the entry to the Fillmore Fish Hatchery area. The trail will become a public community resource with interpretive signage and a kiosk thanks to the Ventura Sierra Club. “Sweet success! Big turnout … them caring and doing makes me happy,” said organiser Nina Danza. See story page 3.

Dec 28: Oil Alert Chapter Chair Jim Hines sent out a warning on social media that Interior Dept. will soon release its offshore oil leasing plan that could include the California coast. Sierra Club will fight the plan with “massive outreach.” Hines predicted after speaking to Interior staffers.

Dec 12: “Dark Vision” for YOUR National Public Lands was the headline for an article by our Los Padres Chapter Chair Jim Hines regarding a recent visit to the Channel Islands. Pacific Sierran version was printed in the Dec/Jan Condor Call. The Sierran also printed his articles on opposing national park entrance fees and another topic of commenting on the Channel Islands. “The Path Forward,” the Sierra Club newsletter, referring to the Trump Administration’s assault on parks, monuments, etc. and a Women’s March on behalf of the Cal/Neva Wildlife team.

Feb 13: At the Ventura Women’s March on Jan. 20, Cara Lopez Lee and Jan Dietrick had a steady stream of views for 41 signs. One visitor said, “I love this – means doing something about it.” So, (considerably?) the Ventura event on Jan. 20, voted to address climate change in its Vision Statement. Sierra Club encourages support of a new Clean Energy 1050 campaign. Login at Socal edition proposals. Learn more at www.citizensforclimatelobby.org

Jan 10: On Jan. 9th the Trump administration abruptly changed rules on their draft offshore oil lease plan, the most aggressive plan ever, saying that they don’t plan to drill off Florida after all because it “is unique” and has an important tourism and fishing industry. This came after Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and Republican Gov. Rick Scott, whose plans to run for Senate would be hindered by a wildly unpopular offshore oil plan. Florida also happens to be Trump’s coastal home. “Mar-a-Lago.”

An outcry followed from every other coastal state, including California. It was already obvious “unique” and have tourism and fishing industries. Indeed, California’s economy is the sixth largest in the world and most of our population is in coastal counties, making offshore oil spills particularly damaging. At the same time the Trump administration is proposing building safeguards in place after the 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster. Learn more and find comment links at: www.protectthespecific

See more on this subject this page and page 3.

Beach leak

It’s been a terrible and tragic month for southern Santa Barbara County, which is still reeling from the recent mudslides. To one more impact for Summerland, the Beach leak.

President Oil colludes

By Katie Davis

Protecting Mar-a-Lago

On Jan. 9th the Trump administration abruptly changed rules on their draft offshore oil lease plan, the most aggressive plan ever, saying that they don’t plan to drill off Florida after all because it “is unique” and has an important tourism and fishing industry. This came after Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and Republican Gov. Rick Scott, whose plans to run for Senate would be hindered by a wildly unpopular offshore oil plan. Florida also happens to be Trump’s coastal home. “Mar-a-Lago.”

On Feb 8 there’s a bus to Sacramento for the one public meeting on offshore oil in California by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). There will also be a big rally. The bus leaves from Ventura, but if there’s demand, it will stop in Santa Barbara as well. Go here to Get on The Bus! www.CFROG.org

Mar-a-Lago

Donald Trump’s Mar-a-Lago, the $300 million home in Palm Beach, was recently used as a location for the New York Times “waste of taxpayer money, an indulgent vacation retreat for President Donald Trump, who owns it.” Trump is renting out the $13 million house for $30,000 a month, according to the Times.

It’s an idyllic setting, protected by a wall, perfect for privacy and avoiding the media. But it’s also a site of concern for environmentalists, who are worried about the impact of the property on the ecosystem and nearby communities.

The property is located on the north side of Mar-a-Lago, near the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse and Museum. The Lighthouse is a popular destination for tourists and locals alike, but the Mar-a-Lago property raises concerns about its impact on the surrounding environment.

In November 2017, the property became the center of controversy when it was reported that Trump had spent $30,000 a month renting the property to a friend of his. The news sparked outrage among environmentalists and other critics of Trump’s administration.

While the Mar-a-Lago property may appear to be a private residence, it is actually owned by the federal government. The property was originally purchased by the government in the 1940s as a training facility for the US Coast Guard.

In recent years, the property has been used by the government for various purposes, including as a temporary base for the President and as a location for official events.

Despite its status as a federal property, Mar-a-Lago has faced criticism from environmentalists and other groups who argue that it should not be used for private purposes.

In 2020, the government announced plans to sell the property to a private developer. The sale has been met with opposition from environmentalists and other groups who argue that the property should not be sold to a private entity.

The Mar-a-Lago property is located in a sensitive ecological area, and its sale to a private developer could have significant environmental impacts. Environmentalists and other groups are calling for the government to reconsider its plans and find a way to preserve the property for public use.
VENTURA SIERRA CLUB

Of the Chapter’s four groups, the Ventura Sierra Club (western Ventura County) is special, ap- pointed by the Chapter’s Execu- tive Committee. See story about what it’s been up to this page.

Ventura’s board starts with Chair Nina Danza and includes Irene Rauschenberger as treasurer, Monica Stanley as secretary, Jim Hines for conservation and jack-of-all-issues Larry Olden, Carol Marsh and Mike Stubble- field.

VSC has regular programs organized by Rachel Enevoldsen and volunteer leader Danielle Rob- bottom. A Santa Clara River com- mittee is headed by Danza, web- site lead in Jose Flores, and social media by Samantha Marin.

CONJEO GROUP

In December, the Conejo Group (eastern Ventura County) membership elected Melanie Ashen, John Holroyd, Steph- anie Scher and Joanne Bulske to serve on the group Executive Committee for 2018 and 2019.

They join Hugh Warren, El- len Sanders and Elizabeth Mac- Govern, who are serving out their 2017-2018 terms.

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EAVESDROPS

“As President Trump voices his determination to expand oil drilling and 20th century energy policies, California is pioneering the sustainable alternative ... gaining a strong foothold in the future energy and global economy.”

~ Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsome, on the welcome news that Venoco has decided to give up its interests in Platform Holly and Goleta Pier leases, effectively ending production there.

Pipe spill suit filed

The jury trial of People v. Plains All American Pipeline began on Feb. 5 in Santa Barbara Superior Court, announced District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley.

The case stems from events that occurred around May 19, 2015, when a 24-inch subterranean oil pipeline (Line 901) ruptured. It allegedly caused the release of raw crude oil, which then surged down a culvert under Highway 101 and into the Pacific Ocean near Refugio State Beach.

The People earlier dismissed the charge against Plains’ employee, James Colby Buchanan, for failing to follow a material provision of Plains’ Spill Response Plan. That charge remains one of the crimes alleged against Plains, and Buchanan must appear as a witness.

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Our brave, new post fire world

By John Hankins

You’re standing in awe among the bare, fire-ravaged grounds and denuded trees, and you spy a spider spinning its web. How the heck did that survive?

It wasn’t there, it was carried there afterward by the wind, said Dr. Sean Anderson, an ecology expert at the Cal-State Channel Islands University. He conveyed even more thought-provoking knowledge to a packed audience at the Poinsettia Pavilion on Jan. 18 entitled: “No Doubting Thomas: Impacts, Management and Our Brave, New Post-Fire World.” It was sponsored by the Ventura Land Trust, whose own lands were stripped.

The Thomas Fire “was truly monumental in scale,” he said, showing a satellite slide with the fire blob as big as L.A. and Santa Rosa Island blanketed in smoke.

In January, heavy rains slammed onto the denuded hills and thrust tons of mud down canyons like a killer volcano.

“You cannot win against these forces,” he emphasized.

The ‘why’ is that weather has changed (jet stream deflecting our rains), we were (are) in a prolonged drought that dried out plants and the winds were heavy (60mph +), but civilization has a role.

In the “old days,” an 1874 photo showed you could ride a horse through Yosemite areas, now it’s choked with brush because man started fire suppression techniques in the 1900s. Ironically, a part answer today is prescribed burns, chancy because of liability issues, pollution and risk of escaping control. But we can also do more with capturing water to increase moisture overall, like terracing, using desal, bioswales, native plants, and fire-safe landscapes around homes. Too, avoid power poles and oil drilling in fire-prone areas.

That’s us, the animals are on their own. Size matters; the big ones (elephants, bears, mountain lions) can survive the fire but maybe not the smoke.

On that score, see the Fire Kill mapper project graphic below. “This is a work in progress,” he concluded.

A video of his extensive talk will be posted soon, check www.venturalandtrust.org.

Thomas Fire facts

The Thomas Fire was truly a two-headed monster, breaking out in two places about four miles from each other near Santa Paula and the other in upper Ojai. Here’s a wince glance.

Now considered the largest fire ever in recorded history in California, the aftermath is bringing threats of (more) flooding, unhealthy air quality (from debris removal), wild animals evacuating to urban areas and unhealthy water and beach quality. See recovery info below for updated details and help.

The Thomas Fire originated as two separate fires, with the first fire igniting on Dec. 4 at 6:26 p.m. PST, in Santa Paula Canyon, near Thomas Aquinas College (hence the name), while the second fire started about 30 minutes later, nearly four miles north in Upper Ojai, at the top of Koenigstein Road.

Santa Ana winds bringing gusts of up to 70mph made it a monster fire that initially and intermittently prevented fighting the fire via aircraft. Thousands of firefighters from all over the west fought the blaze.

Full containment wasn’t until Jan. 12, 2018, over 281,893 acres, mostly in the Los Padres National Forest, destroying habitat, trails and wild animals.

Lives lost, 2 (one firefighter, one person evacuating); structures destroyed, 1063; damaged 280. Subsequent mudslides on Jan. 9-10 in the Montecito area killed at least 20 people and destroyed at least 115 homes. About seven people remain in Cottage Hospital.

Hwy 101 was closed for nearly two weeks from Jan. 9 to Jan 21, along with Hwy 192, which has not opened as of press time. Hwy 101 carries about 100,000 vehicles per day, notably from Ventura and Santa Barbara commuters who got around the shutdown via boat ferries and some via private planes. Others took a long route around to Hwy 5 in Los Angeles.

Cause of the fire is yet unknown and under investigation. However, there are already lawsuits, a class-action on behalf of homes lost and another against SoCal Edison, alleging a power line started the Ojai fire. Others are sure to come, one possibly aimed at oil operations in Ventura County where oil spilled burned for days.

Recovery Information:

www.VenturaCountyRecovery.org
www.courtvib.org/fire-
recovery.doc
http:// AwareAndPrepare.org

EAVESDROPS

You can’t absorb their pain; you can’t absorb their loss. But we’re the only species on the planet that will live when things go wrong. And our level of empathy is what separates us from everything else.”

—Actor and musician Kevin Costner of Summerland who is headlining a major, sold-out event to help Thomas Fire victims in Ventura on Feb. 3.

The Thomas Fire burned 1,000,000 acres and many trails at the Big Rock Preserve.

Donate and learn more: venturalandtrust.org

Let’s Bring Back Big Rock
EVENTS
Feb 8: Sustainable Future for our oceans by Holly Lohuis, marine biologist and Jean-Michel Cousteau’s long-time dive partner. Her multi-media presentation will feature the beauty and crises facing our water planet. At 7pm Thursday, Feb. 8, SB Maritime Museum, 113 Harbor Way. Details and sign-up at www.sbrnm.org

Feb 8: San Nicolas Island free program about its flora, fauna and history by the Navy’s natural resources manager, William Hoyer. 7pm Sanguine Library sponsored by SVVY Natural History Society. Details at www.SVVYnature.org

Feb 13: Offshore oil threat on how to protect our coast from Trump Administration to greatly expand leasing in federal waters. Co-sponsored by SB Sierra Club, EDC and GOO! 8pm Tuesday, Feb 13 at the SB Public Library 40 E. Anapamu St. (See story pg 2)

Feb 13: Audubon Auction from “Victorian Feats to Modern Beaches” 7:30pm at Polinseta Pavilion, 435 Foothill Rd. Ventura Audubon’s Cynthia Hartley gives an overview of Audubon’s origins and learn about the group’s local conservation work.


Feb 28: Banff Mountain Film Festival at the Arlington Theater in Santa Barbara at 7:30pm. Tix available at www.ArtsLiveFestures.ucsb.edu

Mar 8: Deep-Sea Exploration program that includes SB Channel and hydrothermal vent fields by Edward Pustel of the University of the West Coast.

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March 13: PLAN event includes an 8am hike, 10:30am speakers on local wildlife corridors and our own Los Padres Chair Jim Hines at 12:30pm reporting on his trips to Washington DC advocating for public lands. Events take place in Carpgo Park, please RSVP to Carla (818) 307-6418 or www/planopenscenze@gmail.com

March 17: Ventura River Estuary restoration at San Ynez Valley about a 3-day event with some outdoor screenings intended to “ignite passion for nature through film.” For details go to www.NatureTrackFilmFestival.org

Spot critters
Outdoor writer Perry Van Houten has had good luck with the Ojai Valley Visitors’ Guide called “Deerly Beloved, a look at some of the amazing critters that call the Ojai Valley home.”

Those same critters are, of course, all over the land in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties.

What’s the trick to spotting wild animals in nature? he asks naturalist Bruce Vincent.

“Luck. No animal wants to be seen.”

But he also mentions “observational skills, being in tune with what’s around you.”

It’s a good read with some great photos. Here’s the link (go to page 18): https://tinyurl.com/SpotWildAnimals

Want SOLAR in North SB Co? But Electric Bills Too Low?
Check out solar deal
If bills $100/mo, we offer solar for ~1/3 less. Expert staff designs & installs with trained volunteers.
sunwork.org

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Check out the SunWork ad next to this story.
February 26
CAMARILLO CAGUEGAS PARK 2018
4 1/4 mile walk on paved bike trail along the Caguegas Creek. The path winds east along the east side of the creek and serves as a connector between the east side and south side, providing safe passage under the 101 Freeway. Along the way, the trail passes the Villagio Park, the Sports Complex, Adolfo Camarillo High School, and Pitts Ranch Park. We will meet at the Midus Mokwa trailhead parking lot at 8:30am or meet at 9am at the start of the walk at the Pleasant Valley Fields (150 Westpalm Ctr., Camarillo, CA 93010) LORA & PHILIP CLARKE 218-2103 or 218-2105. (VEN)

February 28
BOWFIELD AND SADDLE PASS TRAILS: Moderate 5½ mile hike with 900’ elev. gain. Bowfield Trail to Saddle Pass Trail to southern end of black, with several steep climbs and 360° views along the way. Bring water, food and use leather-soled shoes. Meet at 8:30am. From Lindero Canyon Road, drive west on Bowfield Street almost 1 1/4 miles, park the trailhead on your right. Park on street. MELANIE ASHEN 497-6773. (SB)

March 2
BACKBONE TRAIL HIKE #2: Join us as we continue hiking sections of the newly completed 67-mile Backbone Trail, which winds through the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. The second section (strenuous) starts at the Sycamore Canyon campground day use parking area, where we walk up Sycamore Canyon, among oak, sycamore and walnut trees to Danielson Ranch, and then ascend Sycamore Peak via the Blue Canyon and Chamberlain trails, before ending at the Mishe Mokwa trailhead. Sycamore Peak is the highest point in the recreation area, and has incredible views in every direction. 12.8 miles with an elevation gain of 6,700’ and has incredible views in every direction. 12.8 miles with an elevation gain of 6,700’. Bring plenty of water, lunch, sun protection, and the other 10 essentials. Meet at 7:30am at the Sycamore Canyon parking lot on PCH (746-6030 for shuttle parking fee) next to the trailhead. FONTAYNE HOLMES 300-4950. (CJ)

February 24
GOLD BEACH/MORE MESA II: Hike along the beach at low tide and then up more Mesa, looping around the beach path. Moderate 6 miles round trip. Bring water and a snack. Meet behind B of 101 at Hidden Park at 7am. DeniDwirephotography.com)

February 19
Mojave MOOKWA TRAIL to Sandstone Peak - this moderate 5.8- mile loop trail has 1,300 feet of elevation gain. We'll visit sandstone peaks and native wild flowers. Dogs are also able to use this trail. Reserve a spot online. Moderate times. We will meet at the Ventura carpool parking lot at 8:30am or meet at the Sycamore Canyon parking lot for carpooling. AL SLADEK, 685-2145. (SB)

February 16
SUNBIRD MINE: 12 mile with 1000’ stream of running water. A very long hike. Meet 8am at the Mishe Mokwa trailhead parking area, next to the trailhead. Bring plenty of water, lunch and food and wear leather-soled shoes. Meet at 8:30am at trailhead parking at the end of the Oak View Community Center to Villanova Road. FONTAYNE HOLMES 300-4950. (CJ)

February 12
OLD CABIN SITE – POINT MUGU STATE PARK: Easy 5.6 mile hike with 1070’ elev. gain. Bring water, food, and food and water repellent lug-soled shoes. Meet at 9:30am at the Mishe Mokwa trailhead parking area, next to the trailhead. Bring plenty of water, lunch and food and wear leather-soled shoes. Meet at 8:30am at trailhead parking at the end of the Oak View Community Center to Villanova Road. FONTAYNE HOLMES 300-4950. (CJ)

February 10
ZUMA CANYON: Moderate 4.5 mile hike with 400’ elev. gain. Bring hat, Bug spray, and plenty of water. Meet 9am in the lot at the end of the Malibu-Size parking lot on the right. MELANIE ASHEN 497-6773. (OC)

February 9
OLD CABIN SITE – POINT MUGU STATE PARK: Easy 5.6 mile hike with 1070’ elev. gain. Bring water, food, and food and water repellent lug-soled shoes. Meet at 9:30am at the Mishe Mokwa trailhead parking area, next to the trailhead. Bring plenty of water, lunch and food and wear leather-soled shoes. Meet at 8:30am at trailhead parking at the end of the Oak View Community Center to Villanova Road. FONTAYNE HOLMES 300-4950. (CJ)

February 15
HIDDEN MEADOWS TRAIL: Moderate 6.5 mile hike with 700’ gains. Wonderful views on a clear day. Santa Monica Mit, Simi Valley, and Santa Monica Mtns. Bring water, food and water repellent lug-soled shoes for possible wet stream bed crossings. Carpools leave parking lot near Freddy’s at 8am. On the way back, some of us may stop at Full of Beans for a coffee before walking back down to our cars. We will be meeting at the Ventura carpool at 8:30am or meet us at the Oak View Community Center parking lot on PCH, across from the old carpool lot. FONTAYNE HOLMES 300-4950. (CJ)
March 5, 3rd CYCLOON, Upper Ojai: This is a beautiful canyon in Upper Ojai that can get you into the Los Padres backcountry, but today we are going to do a short hike up the fire road to one of the many oaks of Ojai Valley. We will park at the intersection near the Summit School, then walk up the paved road (first mile) to the namesake of the event. We will continue about two more miles to where the fire road almost twists back on itself. We will meet at the Ventura campground at 8:30am or you can meet us on HWY 150/Sierra Cres. at the intersection near Sugar Saddle. 9:15am. At the end of the hike we will drive HWY 150 into Santa Paula for lunch and then back to Ojai. (VEN)

March 10, HILL’S OFF ACRE: Hike from Casitas Saddle up a dirt road to interesting rock formations. About ten miles round trip. Moderately strenuous. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of a upper State at Hope Ave. at 8am. NOTE: EARLY START TIME: DIANE 455-6818 (SB)

March 12, CITY WALK OF FILMMORE:—To illustrate your own city's story. You can choose the area or the route you want to walk. You will be walking much of the perimeter on sidewalks and bike paths. Please wear comfortable shoes and bring some water. This will be somewhere close to a 5-5.5 mile walk. We will be carpooling to the Ventura campground at 8:30am or meet us in the parking lot near the only Starbucks in Fillmore, near the intersection of Fillmore and HWY 126/ Ventura Blvd, where we will start and end the walk. (650 W Ventura St Fillmore 93015) LORA & PHILIP CLARKE 218-2103 or 218-2105. (VEN)

March 16, NICARAGUA FLAT FROM LEO CARRILLO:—This is an 8.5 mile out and back hike with an elevation gain of 2200 feet. It is a strenuous hike from Leo Carrillo State Park up the Nicholas Flat Trail into the Nicholas Flat Nature Preserve and an adventure of getting up to the Preserve, but a hike with plenty to see. We actually do a loop around the preserve once we are up on the "flats" area, which we may also find a small pond if rain has been recent and the dirt down on the west. Leo Carrillo you get view of the ocean and on a really clear day you may see some of the Channel Islands. We will leave from the Ventura campground at 8:00am and can meet at 9:00am at Leo Carrillo State Park (fee required on PCH). Bring plenty of water, sunscreen, good hiking boots/ shoes, and some snack or lunch. HAIN or HAIN AT 85 CANCELALS 218-2103-2105 (VEN)

March 17, ROCKY PINE RIDGE - SHORT ROUTE: From Camino Cielo, hike into this wonderful pine tree region and skirt along the ridge. Modern hike with some rock hopping, 4-5 mile. Bring water and lunch. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ROBERT 685-1283 (SB)

March 18, ARROYO HONDO: We’ll take the scenic West Ridge trail to get good views of the canyon and the coastline. A moderate 3.7 mile, 600 foot. After a lunch break outside the historic Adobe, a leisurely stroll around the forest floor will complete our day. Meet in the Bank of America State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. If you are coming from the south of Santa Barbara you can meet us at the trailhead. Call or email for instructions. Rain cancels. GERRY 964-5411, gajohncox@cox.net (SB)

SATWIFA NATURAL AREA, SANTA MONICA MTNS., NATIONAL RECREATION AREA - POINT MUGU STATE PARK: 6.1-mile hike. Fossil Trail: Start in the Parking Lot, climb toward Boney Mtn. From there turn up Fire Rd. and down Strenous hike and terrain, easy pace. Bring 10 essentials plus food and water down to the road. Meet in the lot by the bathroom off Lynn Road at Via, Goleta, Newbury Park at 10am. Bring 4x4 ROCKING 983-2147. (VEN)

March 19, LOS PADRES OPEN SPACE ROYLES TRAIL LOOP: The Los Padres National Forest is a place to go after the evacuation orders to go after the evacuation orders. There is a 3.3 mile loop trail located near Westlake Village. When in season, many native wildflowers adorn the sides of the trail. Dogs are also able to use this trail but must be kept on leashes at all times. We will meet at via 9:30am or at the trailhead at 9am (326 S Moorpark Rd, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360) EAVESDROPS 218-2103 or 218-2105. (VEN)

March 24, FREMTON TRAIL: Park on East Camino Cielo and walk North along the fire road into Santa Barbara. Superb views of valley. Bring lunch and water. Easy hike, 4 miles round trip. All at upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. TONY 682-8290 (SB)

March 26, SANTA BARBARA BOTANICAL GARDENS - We check the 7:55am VISTA bus from the Government Center to get to the gardens in Santa Barbara where we get off at City Hall at 9:00am. Then we walk 3 miles (about 5 hours) to get to the Santa Barbara Botanical Gardens (1212 Mission Canyon Rd, Santa Barbara 93111) to wander through the main gardens before crossing the street to the extension, where we will eat our lunch. We’ll have a small snack in the event the bus is an all-day event so we will be getting back to Ventura in the afternoon around 3-3:30pm. Depending on where you live we will depend on which Vista bus stop you choose to take, but we will be meeting at the Santa Barbara Botanical Gardens close to 9am as possible. We carry comfortable walking shoes, bring a drink and or water, a snack. Over the period of the day we will be walking up to 8 miles, but the walking will be broken up over the day, not all at one time. Please bring layers in case it gets cold.

By John Hankins
Editor’s note: Hike the hiking and beach quality in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties after the Thomas Fire and mudslides at Montecito et al? Crappied in so many places, judging from these reports from the field. Crony and fire trails and some roads are closed for repairs. Below are comments from Sierra Club hike leaders and others.

Outings listed on page 6 & 7 are open; hikes will be added when area fire trails are re-opened always check with pertinent ranger stations (see list on page 6) and for Sierra Club outings check the Chapter’s website: http://lospadres2.sierraclub.org

Los Padres National Forest officials have reviewed the area closed to the public due to the Thomas Fire - We now go to the Mt. Pinos Ranger District and prohibiting acquisition to only those areas that border the fire perimeter on the Ojai and Santa Barbara Ranger Districts. — See map page. (NOTE: Ironically, the fire’s stringent fire restrictions (campfires etc.) were reduced from the highest to lowest level not much left to burn)

Stephen Bynoe: “Much of the Los Padres National Forest will remain closed for quite some time in the future. I spoke with Heidi Anderson who is the Burn Area Emergency Response (BAER) team. Within the burn area, the BAER team is planning to recommend that the trails be closed for the winter seasons.” (Chapter Outings Chair)

Anthony Biegen: “Due to this fire we are going to have a much reduced hiking schedule. We will be adding more hikes to the web sites as times goes on.” (SB hike leader)

EAVESDROPS: “We make information about the United States Congress accessible and actionable for public use (free).” — Joshua Tauberer, founder in a website in 2004 that started out as a hobby and has now grown to be a significant way to keep track of issues. Check it out at: www.3opac.com

hot. The bus ride is $15 each way for seniors/$3 for others, bringing exact change. Admission to the Grotto is $8 for seniors with RSVP by previous Monday, or $12 for others. LORA & PHILIP CLARKE 218-2103 or 218-2105. (VEN)

March 31, SB RIVIERA URBAN HIKE: Easy to moderately strenuous hike about 5 miles through residential and neighborhood in Santa Barbara. We will start at the Mission and head up toward APS and Franciscan Park, then across Mission Ridge and back to the Mission. Wear comfortable hiking/ running shoes, bring 2 liters of water and a snack. Meet at the Rose Garden by the SB Mission on Mission Plaza at 9am. Rain cancels. KRISTI email: bhbkgirl2007@gmail.com (SB)

Murray Ruben: “All front range trails from Cold Springs Canyon east to the county line have been totally obliterated by the fire and then the mud flows. Above the canyon creeks, those same trails remained possible due to ash and silting from the fire, dumping up to 2 feet on the Cold Springs Ridge Trail and other similar trails.” (hike leader)

Big Rock Preserve: Ventura (Land Trust) “Big Rock Preserve is currently closed to the public while we make much-needed repairs and implement our fire restoration plan.” Donations happily accepted at: www.venturaregionlandtrust.org


Surf, swim report: Beach and water impacts from Montecito mudslide and Thomas fire are impacting both coastal counties. Contact county websites for warnings and closures. Check weekly updates at: www.sheb.com

In Santa Barbara: Closed as of late January due to poor water quality are Arroyo Burro, Carpinteria, El Capitan State Beach, Goleta Beach, Summerland Beach, and Hammond Beach. County flood control agencies have been dumping truckloads of mud collected from Montecito at Goleta Beach and Santa Barbara Ridge Trail and other similar trails.” (hike leader)

Ray Ford: “Pretty much every major canyon in the burn area has been carved out — they are not riparian corridors; they are truly canyons at this point.” During Jan. 18 talk at Faulkner Gallery, Ford described “now-barren watersheds and their dangerous drop-offs,” and added he was “considering comments and their implications.” Bed conditions likely to change even more during this rainy season. (outdoor writer)
You are not alone on Channel Islands

Would you go solo into nature for weeks at a time? One local author did just that, a week trip each to the various Channel Islands, and he told us about it at first Ventura Sierra Club evening programs Jan. 9. No doubt it’s a path to slowing down and mindful living and the author, Ken McAlpine, also makes us laugh, think and want to be better humans but without abandoning modern life.

Ken looked at the audience full of expert hikers with a bashful start, admitting he is a mediocre 5 out of 10 as a camper. He was not truly alone because the National Park Ranger typically checked in with him at least once a day. But there was a load of empty hours which loomed as he was planning the trips.

He had dreamed up a routine he expected to use but in only a couple days that routine was broken, and in went the following epiphany:

“I just suffered a depressing dinner and the oncoming night did not look much better. The wind had kept pushing the tuna off my fork and was continuing to gather steam. Already my tent was performing pushups. But an hour before sunset I made my way to Inspiration Point through a small field of coreopsis.

“I was feeling sorry for myself and at first glance, the half dead coreopsis didn’t do much to lift my spirits. But I found if I hunched low the small plants afforded some wind break, so I stopped and stood motionless like some paralyzed monk.

“A strange thing happened. There was nothing else to do but observe the coreopsis carefully.”

In that minute Ken realized the life of the plants were perfectly suited with its environment and that coreopsis has trunk and foliage texture with is dependent on sea air to collect water to live. Trying to escape the wind, with low quality equipment, this less competent outdoorsman understood the journey -- and perhaps not the destination -- held more meaning in life.

The standing room only crowd that evening came away willing to try to be mindful of some moments along their way and let themselves be alone but not lonely. You can get a taste of his talk at: https://tinyurl.com/IslandsApart

His book, Islands Apart, is available on the web or through his own site: www.kenmcalpine.com

Ventura Sierra Club programs will happen in March, May, July, September and November. Watch our Meetup for dates and details.

Passion for nature films

The Nature Track Film Festival is having its inaugural event in Los Olivos March 23-25, featuring films from around the world designed to “ignite passion for nature through film.”

Its opening reception will be at the historic and newly reopened Mattei’s Tavern on Friday, and Saturday a free outdoor screening of family friendly films will be at the Corner House Café. Docent led hikes in the Santa Ynez Valley will also be a part of this special event.

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Its goal is to "instill students with leadership skills, attitudes and habits for lifelong learning, inspiring them to be respectful stewards of the natural world.”

For details and tickets to this first-ever event, go to: www.NatureTrackFilmFestival.org

Join the club -- only $15 -- Free Bag -- SIERRACLUB.ORG

JOIN THE CLUB -- ONLY $15 -- FREE BAG -- SIERRACLUB.ORG

Preserved . . . Oil Collusion . . . Leaders . . . Fire & Mud . . . Bigfoot

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