

The Roadrunner

A bimonthly publication of the Kern-Kaweah Chapter of the Sierra Club — July-August 2008

Tejon Ranch Agreement Preserves 240,000 Acres

Reprinted from Southern Sierran, newsletter of Angeles Chapter. Written by Elizabeth Saas, Editor, with additions by Bill Corcoran, Senior Regional Representative Sierra Club & Jim Dodson.

On May 8, 2008, the Sierra Club and four other leading environmental organizations announced a historic land conservation agreement with the Tejon Ranch Company.

According to Sierra Club Tejon-Tehachapi Park Task Force Chair Katherine Squires, ““The Sierra Club’s Tejon-Tehachapi Park Task Force has worked toward the protection of the unique and critically important ecological treasures at Tejon. This historic agreement achieves that protection. I just think this is extraordinary.”

The agreement protects ninety percent of the 270,000-acre ranch in perpetuity. In exchange the Sierra Club will not oppose three developments proposed by Tejon Ranch, including its 23,000 unit Centennial project and a resort and 3,000 unit development called Tejon Mountain Village. Residential development in the Grapevine development area may be a possibility, but the Ranch is on record as saying they do not intend that to be the case. They say that if there is any residential use, it will be "incidental" to some other use.

The Sierra Club had long sought to negotiate with the Tejon Ranch Company regarding the fate of the entire ranch rather than discussing one development project at a time. The agreement resolves the future potential development of the Ranch and fixes in place the lands that will be conserved.

An Ecological Treasure

Tejon Ranch is “the largest contiguous private property remaining in California and the keystone for southern California’s natural legacy,” says Sierra Club leader Jim Dodson, who represented the Sierra Club in the negotiations.

Vast in size, Tejon Ranch is equally vast in its biodiversity, as it marks the intersection of the Sierra Nevadas, the coastal range, the San Joaquin Valley, and the Mojave Desert. Tejon Ranch offers a quintessentially Californian experience of nature. “In one day, a visitor can see fields of poppies in the Antelope Valley, travel through a Joshua tree forest, roam ridgetops of white fir and cedar incense, descend through oak woodlands and cross a vast plain with views to distant peaks at the western edge of the Central Valley,” says Bill Corcoran, Sierra Club Senior Regional Representative. Corcoran joined Dodson in the negotiations.

The agreement announced on May 8th safeguards the enjoyment of this unique combination of Californian environments forever. The agreement will also preserve habitat for threatened and endangered species on the Ranch, including California condor, San Joaquin kit fox, blunt-nosed leopard lizard, San Joaquin antelope squirrel, striped adobe lily, Bakersfield cactus, Valley elderberry longhorn beetle and Tehachapi slender salamander. Scientists who have worked on condor recovery for decades have reviewed the development and found it to be consistent with the bird’s recovery, particularly given the large scale of permanent habitat protection won through the agreement.

The Agreement

The agreement marks the culmination of 20 months of negotiations with the Tejon Ranch Company. “These were very difficult negotiations. An outstanding team of some of the state’s best land use, real estate and environmental law attorneys as well as locally knowledgeable scientists worked with the conservation organizations to achieve this agreement,” says Dodson.

The landmark achievement of these negotiations is Tejon Ranch Company’s agreement to maintain the ecological integrity of ninety percent of the Ranch almost entirely as one contiguous habitat. The preserved lands will comprise 240,000 acres –equivalent to the area seven times the size of San Francisco—of conservation easements in donated and purchased areas. These conservation easements mean that we have removed forever the possibility of development on those lands.

There are two different parts to the easements involved in this agreement. First, the Ranch will dedicate without cost 178,000 acres for conservation easement. Once any one of three developments the Ranch will pursue receives final approval, all 178,000 acres must be dedicated within 30 years.

In addition, through the state bond fund, and based on a fair market price determined by state appraisal, conservation easements will be purchased for five potential development areas on the ranch totaling 62,000 acres. From the governor down, state officials have assured the Sierra Club and its partners that the purchase of easements on Tejon Ranch will be a top priority.

Eventually, when the state budget allows, approximately 50,000 acres of the conserved lands will be acquired in fee by the state for the creation of a state park.

The agreement establishes a conservancy with a board of 12 directors; four of the directors will be members of the environmental groups (Graham Chisholm, Audubon; Jim Dodson, Sierra Club; Joel Reynolds, National Resources Defense Council, Dan Silver, Endangered Habitat League) four will be agreed upon mutually* (Frank Davis, Professor of Ecology, Donald Bren School at UCSB; Jeanne Sedgwick, Former Director of the Conservation Program at the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and Board Member of Resources Legacy Fund; Tom Soto, Managing Partner and Director, Craton Equity Partners; Al Wright, Former Director of the Wildlife Conservation Board and four from Ranch, not known at this time

The conservancy will own the easements, enabling it to manage, restore, and enhance native diversity on the land that's protected through the conservation easements. Ongoing Ranch activities on the conserved lands will be subject to a Ranch management plan developed by the Conservancy and Tejon Ranch.

In exchange, Sierra Club, along with the Natural Resources Defense Council, (NRDC), Audubon California, the Planning and Conservation League, and the Endangered Habitats League agree not to oppose three proposed developments on the remaining ten percent of the Ranch. "Not opposing the developments was a very difficult decision for the Club. It was agreed to in this specific instance because of the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to protect 90% of the Ranch," says Corcoran.

The Conservancy will receive advances from Tejon Ranch during its early years and will receive transfer fees from the sale of residential properties in any of the three developments that may be approved.

Preserving Public Access

The conservancy will ensure the public's enjoyment of the Ranch. Plans for public access to the Ranch include a new, 49,000-acre state park and realignment of the Pacific Coast Trail through the heart of the Ranch. The new conservancy will offer managed public access throughout the conserved areas of the Ranch.

Preserving Condor Habitat

According to Graham Chisolm of Audubon California, the agreement, "included some pullbacks in development on some important foraging ridges" for condors, which do not nest on Tejon but do roost there. At the press conference, Chisolm also noted that "during the course of negotiations, we had the opportunities to engage with and work closely with a number of condor experts," which "really allayed our concerns about the impact that the projects here on the Ranch would have for the California condor."

The environmental groups are continuing to work with Tejon Ranch Corporation to ensure the highest possible enforcement of the Ranch's lead bullet ban as well as providing clean carrion for condors. The recent lead poisoning of several condors, resulting in the death of one, reinforced the fact that consuming lead is the single most important threat to condors.

Benefits of the Negotiated Outcome

There are several reasons why Sierra Club activists pursued a negotiated settlement, according to Corcoran and others who were directly in the negotiations or monitoring them. Given that Tejon Ranch is already divided into over one thousand legal parcels, there was nothing to stop the publicly traded corporation from selling off parts of the Ranch to developers. Had that happened, it would have been virtually impossible to arrive at the outstanding conservation outcome of this agreement. The limited availability of state and federal funding for a full acquisition of the Ranch coupled with an unwilling seller would have made it very difficult to acquire the entire ranch outright. Finally, tens of thousands of acres of the ranch that are protected under the agreement are readily developable and fighting developments one at a time likely would have resulted in more development across more of the Ranch.

Asked for his reaction to the agreement, Gordon Nipp, Vice Chair of the Kern-Kaweah Chapter, added, "A couple

of years ago, I wouldn't have thought anything like this was possible. We're talking about preserving 240,000 acres of incredibly important land, incredibly beautiful land, and that's where the focus should be."

Updates, additional information and opinions can be accessed via the web. Los Angeles Times, Bakersfield Californian, Mountain Enterprise and Center for Biological Diversity are four of several sources to check.

Notes of environmental interest from the past and the present

***** for the Future:** *Action needed:* In his [May Revise of the 2008-2009 State Budget](#), Governor Schwarzenegger dropped his draconian plan to close forty-eight State Parks. However, without a permanent funding stream our parks remain at risk.

To keep state parks off the budget chopping block a measure would raise \$282 million per year by replacing park entrance fees with an annual ten dollar surcharge as part of the California vehicle licensing fee, [guaranteeing free year-long access to all state parks](#).

Please send a message to your state legislators TODAY to let them know you support the State Park Access Pass, and you are counting on them to approve this measure to save our state parks.

******From the Past:** A New Era in Humboldt County. Texas-based Maxxam Corp took over a local timber company 23 years ago. \$\$\$ were the only object of Maxxam. The forests were ravaged. Now the court finally favored a sustainable and economically viable plan for north coast forests formerly held by now-bankrupt Pacific Lumber Company. The Mendocino Redwood Company will take over Pacific Lumber operations. Sierra Club and EPIC hope to see: (1) no more cutting of old growth, (2) recovery of species habitat, (3) use of selection harvest methods, (4) permanent maintenance of timberland, and (5) permanent protection for key resource areas, such as the Marbled Murrelet Conservation Areas.

The Environmental Protection Information Center and the Sierra Club have battled Pacific Lumber's destructive logging practices for these **23 years**. *This case is an example of a company without scruples and a reminder of the value of persistence, persistence expressed by letter writing, telephone calls, attending community meetings and willingness to go to the courts.*

Bottled water statement by Carl Pope, May 16th. At the suggestion of a number of Sierra Club volunteer leaders, and in agreement with the Club's overall value of using resources efficiently and avoiding waste, bottled water should no longer to be offered at any Sierra Club event or be sold from any Sierra Club office vending machine.

You can imagine that the members of the Condor Group are delighted to hear this after all their efforts to fend off ... *successfully, it must be added.....* a proposed water extraction project designed to provide "fresh spring water" for bottled water. Thanks to your Chapter's support, this small group was able to take on the financial risk of such a suit. It could have cost thousands if we had lost. We won and even gained some \$\$\$.

OFFICIAL INVITE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO TALK DIRECTLY TO THE STATE LEGISLATORS

Come join us for our annual Lobby Day on Sunday and Monday August 10th and 11th. You will be part of a team that will help us in passing our priority bills during the most exciting and challenging time of the year at the State Capitol. Be prepared for interaction with other activists and our professional lobbying staff, as well as with legislators and their staff.

It is a two-day event with Sunday afternoon consisting of training by our lobbying team about how to lobby and learning about our priority bills so that you can effectively advocate for them. On Monday, you will work the halls of the Capitol as teams, with meetings scheduled from morning through the afternoon. We will focus on key remaining bills as the session winds down; hot issues this year are global warming, renewable energy, outdoor education, toxic chemicals, and reform of transportation and land use planning.

You will find out that it is possible to have fun and save our environment at the same time! Past participants have found it to be an eye-opening and rewarding experience. A co-pay of \$25 upon registration will be used towards your lodging and food; some travel reimbursement will also be provided. *And if you ask th eKern Kaweah Chapter for financial support you are more than likely to be provided!* More info? contact Annie Pham, 916. 557.1100 ext. 107

KERN KAWEAH ROUNDUP

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY IF YOU PLAN TO PARTICIPATE IN SIERRA CLUB HIKES: *Everyone is welcome, Sierra Club members and non-members, to join in any of the outdoor activities. Requirements: You must be in condition for type of hike, equipped appropriately for the activity, and prepared to sign a Sierra Club release from liability. You must be willing to follow leader's directions. Be sure to bring any personal medicines you might need. Customary appropriate equipment includes good hiking shoes, plenty of water, snack, sunglasses, suntan lotion, layered clothing. The following might be helpful but definitely not required: compass, whistle, matches or lighter, and a good first aid kit. Long pants recommended. Unprepared for the prospective hike? It will be a no-go for you. Participation must be leader approved. Since unexpected change of plans may be necessary, it is recommended that YOU contact the hike leader the night before to be assured that the hike is still going to happen. Please let the leader know ahead of time that you are intending to participate. Check individual group listings for desired means of communication.*

New CA legislation designed to protect the consumer requires us to publish this notice: CST 2087755-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California. This legislation was designed to protect the user of outdoor activities that require cash payments of more than \$50 for participation.

Buena Vista Group More info? Call Isabel, 661.246.6195, or Donnel Lester, 661.831.6784

Tuesday Conditioning Hikes of 4 or 5 miles are at 7:00 PM at the corner of Highways 178 and 184. Contact Gordon (gnipp@bak.rr.com) or Larry (661.873.8107) for more information.

Programs: No speaker programs are scheduled for July and August as we plan for the fall season activities. We will continue to have monthly meetings with the officers. The public is welcome to attend these. For more information contact Isabel at (661) 246-6195.

Highway Cleanup will be on hiatus during the hot summer months. We will resume highway cleanup in September.

Meeting Notices If you would like to receive Buena Vista Group meeting and activity information by email, please contact Donnel Lester, at donnelc3bvg@earthlink.net, with *Add me to the email list*. You can opt out of the mail notices at any time. We try to keep this to once-a-month emailings.

Recycling at BVG Meetings – bring us your old batteries and your old compact fluorescent bulbs.

Condor Group Hikes? Dale Chitwood, 661.242.1076. *More info?* Lockhart, 661.242.0432 jmal@frazmtn.com Meets Pine Mountain Club

SUNDAY STROLLS SCHEDULED ONCE AGAIN. Yes, every Sunday morning, June through August. 8 AM is the starting time. Meeting place is the parking lot of PMC. More info? Call 661.242.0432.

July 26th (Sat) Peak to Peak. Traditional mid-summer hike. 6 miles or so long, the trail goes from Mt. Pinos to Cerro Noreste, the two peaks at nearly 9000 ft altitude with considerable dips in between. Wonderful views to all sides, east, west, south and north, beautiful flowers still in bloom, and cool cool air. Strenuous but no bushwhacking. Repeat: check to be sure this hike will take place as scheduled. Last year it was rescheduled twice and canceled twice. Call Dale Chitwood, 661.242.1076

August 23 (Sat) Flower-filled still (we hope) hike to Cedar Creek. Meet at PMC parking lot, 8 AM. Cedar Creek has become one of the most popular trail camps in the area, owing to its easy accessibility and pleasant surroundings. Derives its name from the stately California incense cedars growing in the area. Cedar Creek also has numerous Jeffrey pine, sugar pine, big-cone spruce and hardwoods which add to the overall beauty of the route. Approximately four to six miles round trip with little altitude change, this is an easy delightful hike. Call Dale 661.242.1076 if you plan to go.

Sept 13 (Sat) Ceqa Workshop Planned For The Second Saturday Of September. Planning and Conservation League professionals will lead this all day study program designed to help community members to respond effectively to the documents involved in development projects, everything from housing projects to sand and gravel operations...any kind of construction that could have an effect on the environment. Mark the date now and plan to come. It will be well worth your time.

Kaweah Group *More info?* call Pam, 559.784.4643 or Diane, 559.781.8897.

No meetings scheduled this summer. In the meantime feel free to contact Pam for further information, etc.

Mineral King Group. *More info?* Call Janet Wood, Chair, 559.739.8527. Please visit *mineralking.sierraclub.org* for more info on group events and activities.

July 12 (Sat) - Group ExComm retreat

July 28 (Mon), Aug 25 (Mon) 6PM Ex com meeting This is the business meeting where we plan our events, goals, and activities. All Sierra Club members are welcome. For location please call Bev at 559.732.3785 to attend.

Owens Peak Group *More info?* **Dennis Burge**, Chair, 760.375.7967 **email:** dennis93555@yahoo.com
Jim Nichols, Hikes, 760.375.8161 jnichols@ridgecrest.ca.us Mtgs: Maturango Museum, Ridgecrest. Please use email for hike questions.

July 12 (Sat) SUGARLOAF, ROUND, AND LOOKOUT PEAKS FROM COYOTE FLAT (Located SW of Bishop between Owens Valley and Bishop Creek, 11261ft max elevation (Lookout), 1500 ft elevation gain, 4.6 mi RT (all three peaks)). We will climb these peaks on the outer edge of the enigmatic Coyote Warp, a prominent feature of the geology of the great Eastern Sierra Fault. Sugarloaf and Round form the "gunsight" easily seen on the S edge of the Coyote Warp as you drive up Owens Valley from Lone Pine looking N. Lookout is on the N edge of the Warp overlooking Bishop and Round Valley. The road to Coyote Flat is probably one of the most elegant but easy 4x4 roads in the eastern Sierra. And the high altitude flowers will be reaching their peak here in July. The hikes up all three peaks (if we have time) are easy, but at high altitude. Meet Sat, July 12 at 7:00 AM at the Ridgecrest Cinema parking lot. Note the earlier meeting time. Call Dennis Burge at 760. 375.7967 or Jim Nichols at 760.375.8161 for more info.

Aug 9 (Sat) BRAINERD LAKE AND FINGER LAKE (Located up the S Fork of Big Pine Creek, 10800 ft (Finger Lake), 3000 ft gain, 8.8 mi RT) Finger Lake is arguably one of the most lovely lakes in the Sierra. Glacier fed by the Middle Palisade Glacier, the lake has striking turquoise color which makes a gorgeous foreground for a panorama of some of the most rugged towering Sierra peaks in the Palisade Range. This area is the jumping off point for climbs of Middle Palisade, Disappointment, Norman Clyde, Temple Craig, and other great Sierra peaks. Brainerd Lake, 600 ft lower, will make a somewhat easier objective if desired. This hike to Finger Lake is strenuous due to the altitude gain, but only moderate to Brainerd Lake. Meet Sat, Aug 9 at 7:00 AM at the Ridgecrest Cinema parking lot. Note the earlier meeting time. For more information, call Dennis Burge at 760.375.7967 or Jim Nichols at 760.375.8161.

Desert Committee Sponsored Hike

September 27-28 (Sat-Sun) Service And Hiking in the Carrizo: This is an opportunity to visit and to assist an outstanding and relatively unknown national monument. Saturday is the National Public Lands Day and we will assist monument staff and join with other volunteers working on improvements for the Selby Campground. Sunday is reserved for recreation. Our group will plan a moderate hike in the Caliente Mountains. The views are spectacular; and the monument is known for the number and variety of raptors present. Contact leader Craig Deutsche, 310.477.6670, or deutsche@earthlink.net CNRCC Desert Committee

For questions about Desert Committee outings in general, or to receive the outings list by e-mail, please contact Kate Allen at kjallen@qnet.com or 661-944-4056.

Saturday, September 27th, 2008 is the 15th annual Public Lands Day. Sierra Club is encouraging its members to show support for our public lands by organizing public lands restoration projects. Any ideas?

FROM THE CHAIR 1

When is the last time someone who does not agree with your environmental ideas considered what you thought? If you publish a "Letter to the Editor", it is seen by thousands of people. It is probable that one of them, who does not already agree with you, will consider what you write. Around here, most disagree with us; letters to the editor (LTE) are one way to reach them. All campaigns urge LTEs. Writing a LTE takes only a finite amount of time. Our publications, programs and members will help you.

Newspaper items stimulate LTEs. My next one disputes Larry Starr who wrote that if the water devoted to the Delta smelt were instead devoted to Valley agriculture, the world's hungry would be fed. Many of the words and facts are from Ken Fry, one of our members; since there is no space in a 250 word letter to acknowledge Ken, I take all the credit.

On June 6, Kern County Counsel Bernard Barmann said he will continue to defend the County's refusal to allow spreading of imported sludge. It might help if a couple of us published a note of praise. Contact me for the clipping.

Of at least 15 letters submitted to the *Bakersfield Californian* that I know of, all but one was published. If you use the words "Sierra Club" in your letter, please allow a group or chapter executive committee to review it before you submit it. I think it is good for the Club to have its name in print; but, if that is not convenient for you, omit our name. It is still likely that you will write good things for the planet!

From the Chair 2

I apologize for writing the following erroneous words that were printed in the Roadrunner: "Replacing incandescent bulbs with CFL's will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 10% to 15% in five years, more than any other single measure that has been proposed. The outcry within our ranks against this very minor inconvenience, despite its huge benefit, is sad. AU" These particular words are wrong, but none of this means I do not support the Sierra Club's distribution of CFL's. Please use as few incandescents as possible. AU

Hike For Health, Hike For Happiness

This could be you in one of these pictures

Midgebuzzings

Sometimes I marvel at the number of very special people who are, or have been, in the Kern-Kaweah Chapter of the Sierra Club. All of us in the chapter have known remarkable individuals whose work has made a positive difference in the health and beauty of our environment, including the preservation of wilderness and the protection of endangered species. I consider these people heroic in the classical sense of the word. They look into the dark woods of exploitive human behavior, find their own place of entry for the sake of generating remedies, and set off into uncharted territory, marking ways for others to follow.

One of our finest is Paul Gipe. Paul served a number of times on the chapter Executive Committee in different positions. In addition, he has lived an extraordinary life of devotion to renewable energy sources, in particular, wind energy. Unhappy with a major wind association with which he was once affiliated, he left and began his own freelance work. Since then he has written several technical books on wind power, all of which have earned international respect. They are beautifully illustrated, mostly with his own photography. The books have been scrupulously researched and are lucid in language and context. He and Nancy Nies, his wife and partner, have traveled to many countries for the promotion of renewable energy, and he has gained a fine reputation, especially in Canada, where he has spent a good part of the last several years in the successful persuasion of environmental authorities to invest in renewable energy sources. His expertise is so well respected that he was recently included in a very small group of specialists personally invited by Al Gore to New York City to participate in an all day discussion on the future of renewable energy.

Paul has been instrumental in the promotion of an idea that makes the use of renewable energy sources more attractive and viable for individual citizens. This is the concept of Advanced Renewable Tariffs, or Feed-in tariffs. I offer the following nearly complete quotation by Nancy Nies explaining this policy: "The state or federal government sets a fair price (tariff) that a utility company will pay an individual or a group for the electricity that the individual or group generates with wind turbine or solar panels. This price covers costs and provides a reasonable profit to the person/people generating the electricity. The extra cost to the utility company is spread out over all of the utility's ratepayers, so that they will see only an approximately 3% rise in each bill. This policy has enabled Germany, whose wind and solar resources are less than in many U.S. locations, to become the world leader in wind and solar energy. We need massive amounts of wind energy immediately, and fee-in tariffs are the proven way to achieve that." It was this idea especially that caught the attention of Al Gore and resulted in the invitation to New York City.

On their journeys in behalf of wind energy, Paul and Nancy have enjoyed exploring the languages of the countries they have visited in Europe and South America. With the help of Nancy, who taught high school French, Paul learned enough to allow him to be interviewed on French television. Together they have also studied Danish, German, Italian and Spanish. They love folk dancing and often find dance groups in their host countries with whom they share music and fun. They are ambassadors, not only for a better world environment, but also for better international understanding, and I am happy to say that we can claim them as our own.

Ann Williams

Executive Committee of the Kern-Kaweah Chapter

Chair: Arthur Unger (Bksf), 661.323.5569. *Vice-chair:* Gordon Nipp (Bksf), 661.872.2432. *Secretary:* Georgette Theotig (Tehachapi), 661.822.4371. *Treasurer:* Lorraine Unger (Bksf), 661.323.5569. Donnel Lister (Bksf), 661.831.6784. Jan de Leeuw (PMC), 661.245.1725. Richard Garcia (Min King), 559.624.0199. Mary Ann Lockhart (PMC), 661.242.0432. Ara Marderosian (Kernville), 760.378.4574,

Chapter Ex-com Meetings: All Sierra Club members are always welcome to attend. Saturday, July 12th, 10 AM, Bakersfield.

Call 661.323.5569 or e-mail artunger@att.net to confirm all meeting dates, as well as location and time of day.

CONTENTS

Tejon.....1-2
 Hikes.....5-6
 Electronic additions.....9+

Want to contact Chapter Chair?

artunger@att.net
note new e-mail address

Want to contact Roadrunner editor?

Mary Ann Lockhart,
jmal@frazmtn.com or 661.242.0432

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Yes, I want to join the Sierra Club. Check enclosed.
 Name _____
 City _____ State _____
 Zip _____
Indicate one:
 Intro \$25____ Sing \$39 _____ Joint \$47 ____ Send
 to Sierra Club, PO 52968, Boulder, CO 80322
 F94Q W 6000-1

Insider News on All Things of Kern Kaweah Concern *UPDATED once again.*

65 persons have already signed up to receive the KERN-NEWS. If you would like to receive up-dated news along with notices of when the *Roadrunner* is posted on our website. sign up now.

20 persons have already signed up to read and respond to the KERN FORUM

Join the Email Discussion list if you want to read, write about and respond to environmental latest topics.. Topics discussed so far: oil drilling on Carrizo, Tejon Ranch. This forum is open to non Sierra Club members as well as members

It still is as easy as pie to join either or both of these lists at

<http://kernkaweah.sierraclub.org/>

Looking forward to talking with more of you the wireless way!

ELECTRONIC ADDITIONS

Sierra Club California 2008 Priority Bills Keep your eyes open for further info.

Smart Growth/Global Warming. SB 375 (Steinberg) would require certain regional transportation plans to include a sustainable communities strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Would provide incentives for more compact development, reduced driving, greater housing choices and conservation of farmland and habitat.

Clean Energy. SB 411 (Simitian and Perata) would require investor-owned utilities to meet a Renewables Portfolio Standard of at least 33 percent by 2020.

Cleaner Air at Ports. SB 974 (Lowenthal) would charge containers shipped through the ports of Los Angeles, Long Beach and Oakland in order to raise money for air quality and transportation improvements.

Land Use/Fire Protection. SB 1500 (Kehoe) would allow the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to require local governments to guarantee adequate structural fire protection before approving development in high-fire-hazard State Responsibility Areas.

Fire Protection. SB 1617 (Kehoe) would establish a fair and equitable new fee on homes in State Responsibility Areas to fund some of the costs of their fire protection. The fee would be tiered to give incentives for reducing fire risks, and would also fund proactive prevention activities.

Safer Products. AB 1879 (Feuer and Huffman) would give the Department of Toxic Substances Control the authority to establish safeguards to protect people and the environment from consumer products containing known toxins like lead, mercury and arsenic.

Recycling Mercury Thermostats. AB 2347 (Ruskin) would require manufacturers to establish a program for recycling thermostats containing mercury, a potent neurotoxin.

Water Conservation. AB 2175 (Laird and Feuer) would establish numeric water savings targets for urban and agricultural water use and require a 20% reduction in statewide urban per capita water use by 2020.

Outdoor Education. AB 2989 (Fuentes) would create a permanent program in the Department of Parks and Recreation that would award grants to schools and non-profit groups that provide outdoor education and recreational opportunities for youth.