New Plans for Devereux/Ellwood

SAN LUIS OBISPO — EDC is still celebrating what may prove to be the key element in our on-going effort to ensure that another victory on SLO North Coast Development.

In anticipation that Hearst would then use the threat of developing these lots to scare the conservation agencies into purchasing easements at a greatly inflated price, EDC and our client group, Friends of the Ranchland, supported the statewide effort to get SB 497 signed into law.

The loophole allowed land speculators throughout California to carve up large areas of land without going through the normal subdivision process. They first researched old maps and deeds to find evidence of ancient lots, many dating back to the 1800s. These lots are then reconfigured into new subdivisions without public review and without having to mitigate for impacts to parks, schools, roads and other essential public services. Some developers have also used this process to greatly inflate the value of their properties in order to squeeze more money from agencies that are trying to purchase the land for the public.

However, although the plan has many positive aspects, EDC will continue to monitor the development plan to ensure that it complies with all coastal laws and regulations. The preliminary plans put forth by the County and University may allow destruction of some coastal wetlands and habitat in violation of the Coastal Act. EDC and our clients hope to work with the County, University, and private landowner to ensure that any plans for the area are designed to protect critical coastal resources while providing needed housing for the University and community.

Another Victory on SLO North Coast Development

SAN LUIS OBISPO — EDC is still celebrating what may prove to be the key element in our on-going effort to ensure that land use decisions along SLO County’s North Coast protect the public interest. On October 13, Governor Davis signed into law SB 497, which closes a legal loophole in the Subdivision Map Act (Act) that developers have used to subdivide large tracts of pristine land like Hearst Ranch. Central Coast residents owe special thanks to all who joined the effort through letters and phone calls in support of this important legislation.

Another victory on SLO North Coast Development

The Hearst Corporation, which is currently in negotiations with The Nature Conservancy and The Conservation Fund to sell their development rights, has found 279 of these ancient lot lines within the boundaries of their 83,000-acre ranch at San Simeon. In anticipation that Hearst would then use the threat of developing these lots to scare the conservation agencies into purchasing easements at a greatly inflated price, EDC and our client group, Friends of the Ranchland, supported the statewide effort to get SB 497 signed into law.

Now that Governor Davis has signed SB 497, Hearst and other developers will no longer be able to exploit this loophole to drive up their profits at the public’s expense.

However, the struggle for conservation of this spectacular stretch of coast is far from over. The agriculture easement Hearst continues to offer will do nothing to reduce their planned resort development. Until the County of San Luis Obispo updates their Local Coastal Plan to reduce the allowable development, the proposal that Hearst brought forward in 1998, which included four resorts, commercial development, residential development, and a 27-acre golf course, is still possible. On behalf of Friends of the Ranchland, EDC continues to work with environmental groups statewide to protect this natural legacy.
A Message from Armando

The year 2001 will be remembered as a time of national tragedy, and of economic and emotional upheaval. Grief and anger, overshadowed by a lingering sense of individual helplessness—in times like these, it is tempting to want to give in to our feelings and isolate.

Instead, this holiday season let’s make a point of giving generously to the causes we value. Let’s open our homes to friends and loved ones. Let’s celebrate another year of painfully hard lessons learned on how to peacefully co-exist with one another, and with the living planet we call home.

Let us also not stand idly by while those who would take advantage of our collective mental and emotional state push for the unprecedented exploitation of our natural resources in the name of “national security.” Now is not the time to turn away from our priorities. We must take the opportunity to ensure that the most important things in life—our health and that of our planet—are not destroyed.

One of the first steps is to embrace the courage to change. Real security is not about missile defense shields. It is about focusing on how to protect our water, air, food and open spaces to sustain us. For a fraction of the cost of the corporate handouts that our government has just doled out, we could restore the health of our oceans, protect our most precious open spaces, invest in a clean energy future, and so much more. But it takes the will of a people dedicated to life, and to living in harmony with the earth.

In response to events of 2001, and in a move to change how we respond as individuals—and as a society—to adversity, it also means thinking strategically and working smarter than ever on behalf of the values that define our place and time in history. Here at EDC we are taking those steps, by restructuring our offices and focusing efforts to heighten environmental awareness, and to be more responsive to the issues that affect us all.

It is therefore entirely appropriate that we celebrate victories like the Governor’s signing of SB 947 to protect our coastline from offshore oil development, and the defeat of “Rigs to Reefs”, which would have let oil companies leave their discarded platforms after extracting the last ounce of profit from the Santa Barbara Channel.

It is also with a fair measure of pride that we watch Santa Barbara ChannelKeeper spin off from EDC to be an independent presence on the water in 2002. To celebrate the occasion, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., will return to Santa Barbara on January 27th to speak at the ChannelKeeper’s Annual Dinner.

Looking forward, EDC is planning a year of activities to celebrate 25 years on the Central Coast, beginning with the February 2nd Vennera County Dinner, where we honor local heroes Ed Marty and Erin Brockovich for their work on behalf of environmental health and justice.

Read more about EDC plans for an online Art that Works art auction, other special events and activities, and ongoing and new cases in the pages of this newsletter, or online at www.edcnet.org.

But before we leave the immediacy of 2001 events, let us join together in celebration of the passing of the year, and enter 2002 with a renewed commitment to working together for a vision of environmental health and justice.

Happy Holidays to all of us, and to the communities, and for our country.

Y. Armando Nieto
Executive Director
Point Arguello: De-Industrializing the Gaviota Coast

SANTA BARBARA — On October 16, 2001, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors moved one step closer to de-industrializing the Gaviota Coast when it voted to accelerate the abandonment of the Point Arguello oil and gas processing facility at Gaviota. Officially, the Board voted to uphold the October 2000 decision of the Planning Commission and to deny the appeals of that decision filed by a number of oil companies, including Arguello Inc., Samedan Oil Corporation, Nuevo Energy Company, and Benton Oil and Gas Company. The vote embodies the County’s intention to require the immediate abandonment of all unused gas processing equipment on site, as well as the future abandonment of all oil processing equipment as soon as existing oil projects are fulfilled.

The Board’s action means that the owners of the facility will start the permitting process to remove most of the unsightly industrial facilities. Just as important, the Board has protected this site from future oil and gas processing activities that pose grave threats to public health and safety. In 1997, for example, a hydrogen sulfide gas leak from this facility caused multiple injuries, as well as the closure of Highway 101.

EDC, representing Citizens Planning Association, Get Oil Out, Hollister Ranch Homeowners Association, League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara and Sierra Club, has taken the lead in this effort. An original opponent of the Gaviota facility, EDC is pleased to see the County take this important step towards restoration of our coast.

Governor Vetoes Senate Bill 1, “Rigs to Rubbish”

CALIFORNIA — One day before the deadline, Governor Gray Davis vetoed SB 1, the controversial bill that would have allowed oil companies to abandon offshore platforms in the ocean and turn over maintenance and liability to the State. EDC took the lead in fighting SB 1, and was joined by over 30 national, state and local organizations in urging the Governor to veto the bill. Of the 27 platforms offshore California, 20 are in the Santa Barbara Channel and their abandonment at sea would have caused environmental, safety and economic harm to our region. Our efforts were bolstered by a University of California Marine Science Council report that found that oil platforms do not provide fish habitat. In addition, other reports disclosed the financial and liability risks associated with the proposal.
Planned Giving Leadership
EDC would like to thank William Denneen for his amazing commitment to the long-term stability of our efforts. This summer, Bill established a trust account and named EDC as a beneficiary to ensure that EDC would be financially viable for many years to come. With this planned gift, Bill began a “philanthropic legacy” that lays a foundation for the future growth and development of our organization. For that, we profoundly thank him. EDC would like to take this opportunity to remind our supporters that planned gifts are wonderful ways to invest in the future of non-profit organizations that are important to you, while also enjoying the financial returns of your gift throughout your lifetime. If you would like to learn more about how to establish a planned gift with EDC, please feel free to call us at (805) 963-1622.

Intern spotlight: Will McGowan
EDC is pleased to be working with intern Will McGowan, an international student from the United Kingdom who is pursuing a Communications degree from the University of California at Santa Barbara. Will is helping EDC’s Community Affairs Department to improve our communications strategy, including revamping portions of EDC’s website. Will’s high energy and great attitude make him an important part of EDC’s team.

Volunteer spotlight: Liz Podolinsky
As a nonprofit organization, EDC relies heavily on support from the community. EDC would like to acknowledge a member of our community who has donated her precious time to support EDC’s efforts: Liz Podolinsky. Liz worked hard to ensure that EDC’s 2001 Auction was a success, and she always makes herself available to help. When she’s not volunteering for EDC, Liz spends her time writing, working for Second District Supervisor Susan Rose, swimming and traveling the world. EDC is grateful for Liz’s professionalism and enthusiasm.

EDC Welcomes All Volunteers
EDC welcomes all enthusiastic volunteers. Call Eve Bailey at (805) 963-1622 if you are interested in helping with events, campaigns, professional services, mailings, community outreach and many other activities.

Spaghetti Dinner
On Saturday, November 3rd, members of the Orcutt Area Advisory Group coordinated the 12th Annual Spaghetti Dinner to benefit EDC. The dinner and silent auction, held in Santa Maria, raised $3,100 to support EDC’s on-going operations. Thanks to everyone who participated in the event. EDC would like to acknowledge Olga Howard for coordinating all of the details to ensure that this event was a huge success.

Your Tax Refund At Work
EDC would like to thank everyone who donated some or all of their tax refund to support our efforts to protect environmental quality of life along the Central Coast. With your help, EDC has raised approximately $5,500 from donated tax refunds.

Ideas for Year-End Giving
For many of us, the end of the year is a time to reflect on the good things we received in the past and to plan for the future. It is a time to consider making a gift to EDC before the end of the year. Gifts may be made in a wide variety of ways. Dependent on your personal situation, you may take advantage of a special tax break, or you may receive a charitable tax deduction.

Making a gift to EDC before the end of the year is a special opportunity to make a gift that will have a significant impact. EDC would like to acknowledge a member of our community who has donated a gift to EDC.

Community Challenge
Earlier this year, EDC received a $200,000 annual Community Challenge campaign to raise a total of $500,000 in matching funds through the Community Challenge supports day of giving.

EDC is pleased to report that 347 households have made donations to the Community Challenge, increasing the total amount raised.

These are critical times for our country and for the group of residents who have declared their support for EDC’s Community Challenge. To reach our goal EDC is considering giving a cash donation, establishing a planned gift, and the process.

Check out EDC’s website! 
Have you checked out EDC’s website lately? It features all of our programs and cases, press releases, recent news, upcoming EDC events, and much more.

Keeping in Touch
Keeping in touch with our members and supporters is critical to our success. Please make sure that your mailing address and email address are up-to-date so we can keep you in the loop on important environmental issues.
EDC would like to thank the many individual and group sponsors, participating restaurants, musicians and volunteers who made our 2001 Thank Goodness It’s Friday season a smashing success. Your hard work and overwhelming generosity helped EDC raise approximately $10,000 from Santa Barbara’s TGIFs alone. We want to thank everyone who attended an event in 2001, and look forward to another year of TGIF memories in 2002.

Participating Restaurants
Aldo’s Italian Restaurant
Steve Dunn
Emilio’s Restaurant & Bar
Fresco
Good Earth Restaurant
Little Alex’s
Main Squeeze Cafe
Our Daily Bread
Palazzo Trattoria Italiana
Paradise Cafe
Pacuca
Piranga Restaurant & Sushi Bar
Playa Azul Cafe
Rock’s Restaurant
Santa Barbara Brewing Company
SoHo Restaurant & Music Club
Sojourner Cafe
Trader Joe’s

Musicians
Antara & Deliah – Contemporary folk
Bill Lanphar – Americana/folk
Jorge Mijangos – Cuban guitar
Jeff Mills – Irish music
Craig Stuart & Kasey Lloyd – contemporary
Red Star Productions

Sponsors
Robert D. Bernstein
Mike Brown & Laura Malakoff
Citizens for Goleta Valley
Community Environmental Council
Friends of the Ellwood Coast
Gaviota Coast Conservancy
Isla Vista Food Co-op
Isla Vista Youth Group
Local Ocean Network
Mid-State Bank
Patagonia, Inc.
Susan Rose
San Marcos Foothills Coalition
Santa Barbara Audubon Society
Santa Barbara Bank & Trust
Sierra Club, Los Padres Chapter
John Strawn and Nancy J. Smith, M.D.
Surfrider Foundation
UCSB Environmental Studies Associates
Ann Veazy
Mike & Diane Wondolowski
Jon Zuber & Mike Allen

Special thanks to Steve Dunn for donating and cooking over 150 pounds of fish for the Fall Feast.

Left to right: Sponsors and supporters; friends of EDC, Steve Dunn

The Environmental Defense Center grew out of the modern environmental movement that was born in the aftermath of the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill. That movement in turn led to the creation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, and other environmental protection laws. Citizen groups gained confidence when this new legislation forced developers and others to take serious notice of the environment for the first time. New groups were formed to watch the watchdog agencies. But by the mid-1970s, environmental despilers had developed an army of legal experts who were increasingly adept at evading governmental restraints.

In 1977, citizens and groups on the Central Coast turned to their own experts for help – attorney J. Marc McGinnes, activist Selma Rubin and others at the newly established Environmental Defense Center. In 2002, EDC will celebrate its 25th year.

As we look back on our successes, it is equally important that we join together as a community to tackle current and future challenges to our quality of life: preservation of open spaces, restoring the quality of our streams and ocean, protecting endangered species, preventing risks to human health, and more.

As you hear more about EDC’s 25th Anniversary activities throughout 2002, consider joining in the celebration. Please call us at (805) 963-1622 to find out more.
Planning Commission Recommends Strong Oak Protection Program

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY – Biologists call oak woodlands one of most biologically valuable and imperiled habitats in this part of the state. In spite of this, Santa Barbara County is one of few counties with considerable oak habitat but without specific regulations to address removal of native oak trees in rural areas. This may soon change, as the County is considering a range of oak protection programs designed to slow the loss of oaks. EDC has consistently advocated for strong protection for oak habitat since this process first began.

In 1998, the public outcry when Kendall Jackson cleared 908 oak trees without permits prompted the County to convene the Oak Protection Collaborative Process. In 1999, the County began developing oak protection policies based on the work of the collaborative process. In its environmental review, the County concluded that regulations addressing the number of oak trees that may be removed, combined with incentives to enhance oak trees and woodlands, would provide the most assurance that oak trees would be protected for future generations.

EDC strongly supports incentives for landowners to preserve and plant native oak trees. However, it argues that any voluntary program would not set limits on oak tree removals and would not require any replacement trees for those removed. County staff has indicated that 1,000 oak trees have been removed since 1996-97, and that since the recommendations of the Collaborative process in 1999 and the circulation of voluntary oak protection guidelines in 1998, 340 oak trees have been removed from four agricultural projects alone.

In July 2001, the Planning Commission recommended an Oak Protection Program that includes both a regulatory component and incentives, which will be considered by the Board of Supervisors next year. Anyone who is concerned about the plight of oak trees in Santa Barbara County is encouraged to get involved.

Pesticides in Our Water

The most sensitive use of groundwater is for drinking water. In Ventura County, portions of its domestic water come from the local watershed. Although Ventura’s drinking water is currently deemed safe, due to increasing application of pesticides, it has become imperative to examine the County’s groundwater contamination and its effect on the quality of our drinking water.

Ventura County’s groundwater is vulnerable to large-scale agricultural applications of chloropicrin, a soil fumigant often applied with methyl bromide. Efforts to assess the human health risks from exposure to chloropicrin are minimal at best. Ventura County’s groundwater is vulnerable to large-scale agricultural applications of chloropicrin, a soil fumigant often applied with methyl bromide. Efforts to assess the human health risks from exposure to chloropicrin are minimal at best.

Chloropicrin can also be manufactured during chlorination of drinking water. The total combined levels of chloropicrin from agricultural application and drinking water treatment, could be toxic and pose health hazards to the 2.4 million people receiving groundwater in their drinking water in these four counties.

The use of chloropicrin will likely rise further in the future. Thus it becomes even more critical for agencies to start monitoring this chemical now in our water supply, in order to understand and track the way a future increase in use of chloropicrin could pose threats to human health.
Promotoras and Promotores

Socorro López Hanson, Program Manager for the Central Coast Environmental Health Project, has been working with a new program called Promotoras and Promotores in Ventura County to provide training on how to prevent pesticide poisoning and what to do if exposed. The purpose of the Promotoras and Promotores Program, consisting of volunteers under the Ventura County Public Health, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Programs, is to encourage Latinos in the community to use available Ventura County services. This program is needed because Latinos are less likely to receive the health and social services essential for a healthy family due to language, transportation and cultural barriers.

Promotoras and Promotores are English/Spanish bilingual and have been trained as lay health promoters. They receive training on various health topics and presentation skills. This training empowers them to develop a grassroots network for promoting healthy communities. They have received training from: Public Health Programs, California Rural Legal Assistance, Behavioral Health Department, VCMC-Family Planning Programs, Lideres Campesinas, Match of Dimes-Comenzando Bien, Oxnard Neighborhood Programs and now the Central Coast Environmental Health Project.

As a result of the training provided by CCEHPP, two Santa Paula Promotoras are planning to conduct a similar presentation for their community. The 18 people who were present for the CCEHPP training will in turn share the information they learned that day with many others in their communities, thereby increasing the safety and health of many more individuals. The success of this program lies in its ability to help each maintain the health and safety of our environment and CCEHPP is proud to participate.

ChannelKeeper's New Venture

As planned, Santa Barbara ChannelKeeper will be spinning off from EDC on January 1, 2002. ChannelKeeper will continue to partner with EDC on many important projects including the lawsuit against Halaco Engineering Co., one of the South Coast’s worst industrial polluters.

ChannelKeeper enjoys growing support from the community and wish to thank everyone for their contributions, financial or otherwise. Like most lean groups, we have a constant need for volunteers to help with policy work, water quality monitoring and restoration, and our on-the-water efforts.

ChannelKeeper will become an independent organization, and will continue to be the ocean’s advocate before all regulatory bodies. National, state, regional and local authorities make rules that directly impact water quality in our creeks, wetlands and the Channel. ChannelKeeper will review all agendas and attend those meetings where critical issues affecting clean water are discussed.

Our Five-Point Platform is as follows. ChannelKeeper works to:

1. Protect and Improve All Remaining Coastal Wetlands. Over 90% of California’s historic wetlands have been destroyed. We’ll use all available legal means to protect what remains on the South Coast. Stopping greenhouse pollution of the Carpinteria Salt Marsh is one of our top wetlands priorities.

2. End Regional Sewer Pollution. Our governmental agencies charged with making sure our beaches are clean have not been successful. We are investigating the sewage system in Santa Barbara to determine if leaks from it are causing or contributing to the problem. We also plan to challenge Goleta Sanitary District’s “waiver” that allows it to discharge sewage into the ocean that has only received primary treatment.

3. End Pollution from Urban Runoff and Industrial Discharges. Halaco Engineering is probably the worst industrial polluter on the South Coast. We will continue to pursue our lawsuit against this company despite its numerous harassment and intimidation tactics (including a trespass lawsuit against our Executive Director). We have an eye on other polluting industries, including junkyards, along the South Coast.

4. Conduct On-The-Water Pollution Patrols. The public is invited on our boat, the Magic, as we patrol the channel and live auction items.

5. Monitor and Restore Local Waterways. We conduct regular water-quality monitoring throughout Santa Barbara and on the Ventura River watershed. We also plan next year to replant eelgrass and kelp in the Channel. If you’d like to help monitor creeks, storm drains or the ocean, or if you’d like to dive with us, please let us know. Call us at (805) 563-3399.

Volunteer Graphic Designer

needed

to help develop outreach materials for farmworkers. Fluency in Spanish preferred but not required. Call 963-1652 for more information.

Santa Barbara ChannelKeeper Dinner

Sunday, January 27

Help launch ChannelKeeper’s independence by supporting its upcoming fundraising event, on Saturday, January 27, 2002. The event, which will be held at the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum, features keynote speaker Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., and includes a catered dinner, Sanford wines, and silent and live auction items. Award presentations will honor Wayne Forrest, Susan Jordan and Barry Schepler. For more information, please call (805) 563-5665 or (805) 563-3399.
Concert to Benefit Paso Watch and EDC
Join us on Saturday, January 19 for An Evening with Acoustic Guitarist Laurence Juber - Grammy Award Winner and former lead guitarist for Wings. Acoustic Guitar Magazine calls Juber “one of the most gifted and versatile fingerstyle guitarists on the scene.” Proceeds from the event will benefit Paso Watch and EDC. The event will be held at Castoro Cellars in Templeton and will include appetizers and dessert. Tickets are $75. For information and ticket reservations, call (805) 237-4443.

Art That Works
Art That Works is an opportunity for our community to celebrate and take pride in the work of some of our best artists, to acquire objects of unusual aesthetic value and utility, and to support EDC’s on-going efforts to protect and preserve environmental quality of life along California’s Central Coast.

Fifteen distinguished artists from Southern California have come together to organize an on-line exhibition of their work to benefit EDC. Each artist is a master of the craft who creates functional objects of exquisite beauty, originality and longevity. EDC will receive the gallery commission, or 50%, from each sale.

We hope you will join us in this unique presentation of exquisite works of art. Individual pieces or information about the artists can be viewed on www.fineartthatworks.com or by requesting an exhibition catalog. Tours of the artists’ galleries will occur in early 2002, culminating with an invitational one-day exhibition and sale scheduled for late March. Please call us at (805) 963-1622 if you would like to learn more about Art that Works.