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PHASE OUT OIL IN INGLEWOOD

Culver City to Phase Out Oil Extraction on Inglewood Oil Field (IOF)

Written by DAVID HAAKE
Photo by JOHN NILSSON

For nearly 100 years, residents of the Greater Baldwin Hills region in South Los Angeles have borne the brunt of significant environmental and health impacts as a result of the operation of the Inglewood Oil Field. This 94-year-old urban oil field has a long legacy of failures that have polluted our local environment and impacted the health and safety of our community while providing little benefit in return. These incidents are only growing more frequent as infrastructure ages and oil extraction becomes more difficult. Additionally, continuing oil extraction contributes to the existential threat of climate change and high-pressure oil well techniques puts our community at higher risk of nasty pollutants.

There have been an increasing number of incidents which have had negative impacts on the community and our environment. Most recently, on April 1, 2019, there was an oil-water spill from the

PROTECTING THE MOJAVE DESERT’S WILDLIFE

Sierra Club Fights to Stop Dangerous Mojave Desert Water Mining Scheme Backed By the Trump Administration

Written and photo by JOHN MONSEN

The Sierra Club is fighting back against one of the biggest threats faced by our Southern California deserts, a plan by corporate water raider Cadiz Inc to extract 16 billion gallons of water a year from under public land in the Mojave Trails National Monument. The monument, located near Joshua Tree National Park, is one of the driest places on earth. Cadiz hopes to sell its expensive product to water districts across the southland, potentially driving up water rates.

The project has many glaring flaws, not the least of which is that Cadiz Inc would mine water at a rate up to 25 times faster than the water table is replenished. This would dry up desert springs on which wildlife such as the magnificent desert bighorn sheep depend. The

Trump Administration has waived a federal review of the project and declared it a national infrastructure priority.

Prior to working for the Administration, Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt worked for the law firm that represents Cadiz.

As the federal government is falling down on the job, the state of California is stepping up, with new legislation (Senate Bill 307) that would hit the pause button on the project and subject it to a science-driven review by the State Lands Commission concerning its impact on public lands. Sierra Club California, the Angeles Chapter Water Committee, and many allies worked to pass the bill despite intense lobbying by Cadiz, which

public outcry that resulted in a settlement agreement and the IOF’s current regulations.

Such events serve as unfortunate reminders that oil and gas operations are inappropriate in urban areas. The only real way to fully protect residents’ health and the health of the environment is to begin the process of ceasing all hazardous activities. In June 2018, the Culver City City Council unanimously voted to develop a plan to phase out oil drilling in its 10% of the IOF. Likewise, the Sierra Club Clean Break team is working to encourage the County of Los Angeles to phase out oil and gas operations in the other 90% of the IOF, clean up the field, and convert it to the long-awaited 1000-acre Baldwin Hills Park.

For more information, go to www.cleanbreak.info You can also take action and help us urge the LA County Board of Supervisors to choose the 100% renewable energy default for our community choice energy program at iof.socalnow.org

If you want to help out, join the Angeles Chapter Water Committee at angsc.org/water or contact the author of this piece at wildernessjfm@aol.com
LITTLE CITY THINKS BIG

Written by SUSAN JELUS
Photo by GARRETT WONG

The City of Santa Monica initiated a 100% clean energy option for its electric power customers on February 1st. They accomplished this in partnership with Southern California’s Clean Power Alliance (CPA), a government-affiliated agency that offers electricity generated from renewable sources. CPA is now the default energy provider for residents of 29 cities and two counties after starting with 30,000 customers last year, increasing to 950,000 residential customers in February, and adding 100,000 business customers in May. Southern California Edison (SCE) will continue to deliver the power, handle the billing and customer service, as well as the rebates and incentives that will remain in effect.

Kevin McKeown, a Santa Monica City Council member, and one of CPA’s elected directors, explained: “We played a founding role in CPA. And we have been willing to make tough choices to make this happen.”

Although Santa Monica implemented a default option of 100% renewable electric energy, customers may choose either 50% or 36% renewable energy, instead. The cost of the 100% renewable option is just 7-9% higher than the Southern California Edison (SCE) standard plan. The cost of the 50% renewable energy option is 0-1% less than the SCE standard plan. Although, Santa Monica residents have faced the energy challenge head-on: about 95% have decided to stay with the 100% plan showing personal commitment to fighting climate change.

THE KEELING CURVE

Written by STEVE WICKE
Photo by SCRIPPS INSTITUTION OF OCEANOGRAPHY

It has been nine months since The Climate Action Team of the Sierra Club and The Broad Theater in Santa Monica brought you the play “Dr. Keeling’s Curve” based on Charles Keeling, a scientist whose research on carbon dioxide (CO2) gave the world its first early warnings of global warming. CO2 is a greenhouse gas—byproduct of burning fossil fuels—which traps heat from the sun and the more it gets released into the atmosphere, the warmer the planet gets. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the increases of atmospheric CO2 are responsible for about two-thirds of the total energy imbalance causing Earth’s temperature to rise. The past few decades are proof of the rapid warming of the planet with the 10 warmest years in the 139-year record all having occurred since 2005, with the five warmest years being the five most recent years. Recently, a report revealed that at least 1 million species were at risk of extinction thanks to human activity and carbon emissions and that up to 300 million people are at increased risk of floods and hurricanes because of the loss of coastal habitats.

“Higher levels of CO2 are associated with the effects of climate change”

Sixty years ago, the Keelings Curve measured the CO2 levels in the atmosphere at 315 ppm (parts per million), today we have reached 415 ppm, meaning that for every 1 million molecules of gas in the atmosphere, 415 were of CO2.

With the Keeling Curve only increasing, as the planet inches toward 500 ppm, we are running out of time to address the climate emergency we are facing. Scientists are sounding the alarm over the potential for catastrophic changes to our environment reaching a general consensus: We have to cut carbon emissions in half by 2030, keep fossil fuels in the ground and switch to renewable energy.

The good news is that at the state level California is leading the way in our efforts to combat climate change. Last September Gov. Brown signed into law SB 100, which mandates that our electric grid must be powered by clean energy by 2045. On December 2018 the California Air Resources Board passed a rule stating that all buses used in California must be zero emissions by 2040 and that all single housing units under three stories must have rooftop solar panels starting in 2020. At the local level the city of Los Angeles efforts to take more aggressive actions on climate change has also been set in place through a new sustainability plan that incorporates a Green New Deal.

You as an individual can also help. Talk to your local city council, and write letters to the editor of your local newspaper demanding action on climate. Start transitioning to a more sustainable lifestyle, consuming less, conserving water, adapting your diet, avoiding waste, and becoming more energy efficient. But most importantly, by talking about climate change, getting others engaged and finding common ground.

Get involved with The Climate Action Team at angsc.org/climate You can also contact Steve Wicke at sierracclub.stevewicke@gmail.com, or Suvan Geer at suvangeer@sbcglobal.net
Get Outdoors and Enjoy

If you have ever been hiking in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, you’ve probably marveled at how such boundless nature exists in the urban sprawl of Southern California. In the idyllic scenery sitting around Solstice Canyon Loop Trail, forgetting all of city life’s unpleasantries is almost a little too easy, as this boundless nature captivates trail-goers to distraction. In the process, what is too often left forgotten is how this public land came to be.

For almost a hundred years, a ceaseless battle raged between local conservationists and land developers in the Santa Monica Mountains. It began in the 1920s when developer Alonso Bell met the opprobrium of activists for proposing to dynamite what is now Topanga State Park in favor of a limestone quarry and continued into the turbulent ’30s when Santa Monica and the surrounding hills became a playground for a few wealthy landowners. Then, in the post-war housing boom of the 1950s and 1960s, powerful and well-financed eyes newer to the scene proliferated frightening proposals that would turn pristine mountains into landfills, housing development projects, and canyon-cutting highways.

Sue Nelson, a longtime local in the area, was the first to speak out. Worried about the recent development, Nelson founded a group she named “The Friends of the Santa Monica Mountains, Parks, and Seashore,” whose effective politicking resulted in the election of avowed conservationist Marvin Braude and the establishment of the Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, along with a nature preserve stretching from Franklin Canyon to Point Mugu as a part of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978. The three women became known as the “Mothers of the Santa Monica Mountains.”

The group realized that to promote their campaign for the protection of the Santa Monica Mountains, they would need to enlist thousands of grassroots supporters. Approaching nature enthusiasts like Ron and Mary Ann Webster to lead outings on the fire roads that serviced the area, the Task Force often had thousands of hikers and reporters literally following their footsteps. No doubt, these hikes were a significant factor in the support for the establishment of the Santa Monica Mountains Preserve.

After the establishment of the Preserve, Ron and Mary Ann were...
our Hikes and Activities!

Celebrating An 81 Year Legacy
Keller Peak Ski Hut - Saturday, August 17, 2019, at 1:00 PM

Join us in celebrating the 80 year legacy of Keller. The lodge is now newly refurbished with updated kitchen, new windows in the main dining room and hot water. The hut is located 5 mi east of running Springs across the highway from Snow Valley. Registration TBA. For more information contact leaders Delphine Trowbridge at dtrowbridge36@gmail.com (818) 482 6146, David Eisenberg at david.f.eisenberg@gmail.com (818) 247-4635, or reservationist Jacqueline Meese at jacqueline.meese@gmail.com. This is a Verdugo Hills Group Outing
Event details: Saturday, August 17th at 1pm to 2pm at the Keller Peak Ski Hut, 35150 CA-18, Running Springs, CA 92382

Griffith Newcomers Hike
Griffith Park area - August 3, 2019, at 8:30am

We’ll hike up to the <La La Land> bench, down through shady Fern Dell, and enjoy the views of the Hollywood Sign and the Griffith Observatory. Then we’ll grab a coffee and a pastry at the Trails Cafe. Meet 8:30 am near the entrance to the big parking lot on Fern Dell Dr. Bring a camera, water, sun protection, hat, and light hiking boots or trail runners. Rain cancels. Leaders: McWhinney willmncw@gmail.com and Barbara Hensleigh barbarahensleigh@gmail.com (213) 703-8767. This is a Central Group Outing
Event details: Easy paced, hilly walk, 3 miles, 500 ft gain, approx 2 hrs. Newcomers are welcome. Meeting point: Fern Dell Dr/Western Canyon Rd, Los Angeles, CA 90068, at 8:30pm on every Saturday of even months.

then tasked with designing a trail system that would open up the area to the hikers and campers for which the area had been created. With the help of volunteers, Ron identified and physically constructed needed trails, while Mary Ann handled the intricate details as well as dealt with the political threats to the land. With that, the Santa Monica Mountain Task Force Trail Crew was born. Stories like these serve as great reminders of the idea that just a few dedicated people can change their surroundings. In the case of the Santa Monica Mountains, we are grateful for four committed women, a progressive politician, and one dynamic couple. But who will be the next to carry the torch into the next generation?

With the opening of the Backbone Trail, that torchbearer could be you. Bill Vanderberg, the crew leader and vice chairman of the Task Force Trail Crew says that while the building of trails in the Santa Monica Mountains is nearly complete, volunteers are needed to maintain the many miles of existing trails. If you are interested in joining, visit their website and learn more at www.smmtf.org/trails

Registration for 2020 opens July 15
WildernessTravelCourse.org
CST #2087766
HEART AND SOUL OF CUBA NOVEMBER 15 - 23, 2019

There’s nowhere in the world quite like Cuba and no better way to explore its distinct culture than with the Angeles Chapter Travel Adventurers on this 8-day cruise.

Our first port of call, aboard the Royal Caribbean, is the Grand Cayman—this beautiful island strikes the perfect balance between glitzy glamour and easygoing island life, followed by three unique Cuban ports. Get up close and personal with Cuba’s heritage in Havana. Go off the cobblestone path to meet the locals in Santiago de Cuba. Uncover the “Pearl of the South” in Cienfuegos. Delight in immersive Cuba-inspired entertainment, cuisine and guest lectures onboard the ship.

For reservations and more information, please contact Sridhar Gullapalli at sridhar_gullapalli@yahoo.com (310) 821-3900 or Donna Specht at donnaspecht@juno.com (714) 963-6345

VOYAGE ALASKA ON THE WILD SIDE MAY 15 - 22, 2020

Travel with your Sierra Club friends to see the "wilder" side of Alaska! Come cruise aboard the Radiance of the Seas from Vancouver, B.C. to Seward, AK. Sailing through the Inside Passage. Watch the rugged scenery and native landscapes on our way to go ashore and explore the Pioneer ports of Ketchikan and Juneau. And for our 1898 Gold Rush buffs: Skagway, the Gateway to the Klondike. Prepare to go ashore at Hoona and Icy Straight Point, home of the Tlingit Community. Sailing into Disenchantment Bay, get ready for the mighty Hubbard Glacier, 400' tall, 76 miles long and 1,200' thick.

For reservations and more information, please contact Donna Specht at donnaspecht@juno.com (714) 963-6345

HARWOOD LODGE FALL FESTIVAL SEP 21 - 22, 2019

Enjoy clear mountain air, hiking, music, relaxation, blue skies, and beautiful mountain views and celebrate the beginning of Fall at Harwood Lodge. Musicians bring your instruments. Newcomers welcome. Includes hikes to the Waterfall and a special Geology hike with Jay Schneider. Includes Saturday and Sunday hikes, Happy Hour, lodge fees, Saturday night dinner. Sunday breakfast, hike, shared chores and check out by 3pm.

For reservations and more information, please contact Donna at Specht donnaspecht@juno.com (714) 963-6345, or Jay Schneider at rtnttnj@aol.com (626) 841-2667
The Sierra Club Angeles Chapter welcomes Magda Mendez as the new Communications Coordinator on staff at the Chapter Office. She started Monday, April 22, 2019. She will be focusing on communications and marketing efforts, as well as media relations to help increase the capacity of the Chapter.

Our Sierra Club Political Leadership award will be given to outstanding political leaders from Los Angeles and Orange Counties along with the Inland Empire.

Tickets are $100 and sponsorship opportunities are available. You can also donate any amount to the Political Action Committee at any time. Send a check made out to California Sierra Club PAC 3250 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 1106 Los Angeles CA. 90010, or donate online at www.angsc.org/PAC.

Your donation of any amount will help the Sierra Club in our efforts to protect the environment and our quality of life by supporting political candidates that make environmental protection a priority. Please make your donation to the PAC today. Big oil, mining and polluters will be doubling their efforts to stop California’s progress toward sustainability and a stable climate. We need your help now to make sure California stays on track for a Green Future.

Event details: PAC Fundraiser at the Woman’s Club of Orange, 121 South Center Street Orange, CA 92866, from 3:00pm to 6:00pm on Sunday, August 11th, 2019.

Contributions to the California Sierra Club PAC – PAC ID 13909739 – require that Donor name, address, employer and occupation information be provided. Donations to the California Sierra Club PAC are not tax-deductible, they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts.

Magda was formerly the Communications Coordinator at the Sierra Club Oregon Chapter in Portland, OR, from Sept. 2016 through Nov. 2017 before relocating to Los Angeles for her husband’s job as an architect. Originally from Mexico City and having lived abroad for 6 years, she is fully fluent in English and Spanish. Her experience includes event planning, outreach, project management, public relations, marketing, and communications.

She received a bachelor’s degree in Marketing and a Diploma in Public Relations from The Center of Studies in Communication Science in Mexico City and a master’s degree in Environmental Studies, specializing in Communications from The University of Melbourne in Australia.

Contact Magda at magda.mendez@sierraclub.org and (213) 514-5805.

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Magda Mendez
Editor
magda.mendez@sierraclub.org

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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Sierra Club Angeles Chapter depends upon volunteers to do much of what needs to be done. Our work is driven by impassioned volunteers just like you! For current opportunities please contact Louise Fleming at angeleschapter.volunteer@gmail.com or go online at volunteer.socalnow.org

The Sierra Club Foundation supports the Angeles Chapter in partnership with CARS™, a national vehicle donation program.

Donate Your Vehicle Online at www.angsc.org/cars or call us at 844-6-SIERRA or 844-674-3772

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