Join us!
Upcoming Events

ForestWatch Members’ Gathering
November 30, San Luis Obispo

Join us for some tasty appetizers, wine and beer as we take a photographic journey of the Carrizo Plain with local photographer and ForestWatch member Bill Bouton. His photos capture the wildflowers, wildlife, and landscapes of San Luis Obispo’s only national monument. This event is FREE for current ForestWatch members. The gathering takes place at Meadow Park in SLO from 5:30 to 7:00pm. For more information, see page 7 inside this issue. Space is limited, so contact diane@LPFW.org to RSVP today!

ForestWatch Holiday Party
December 13, Santa Barbara

Celebrate the holidays with ForestWatch and renowned photographer Jeff Jones at his new Lumnos Gallery. His December exhibit, Wilderness, Home, will highlight wild landscapes here at home. Mention LPFW when purchasing a Jeff Jones gallery print in December and 50% of that sale will benefit ForestWatch. Holiday party features appetizers, wine, and yuletide cheer from 5:00 to 7:30pm. Space is limited to current LPFW members and their guests. Contact diane@LPFW.org to RSVP today!

Save the Date - Ojai Wild!
April 13, Ojai

Mark your calendar for our 6th Annual Ojai Wild! creekside barbeque on Saturday, April 13, 2013 from 3 to 6pm. It’s our most important fundraising event of the year, and takes place at The Thacher School’s picturesque Diamond Hitch Camp along the foothills of the Los Padres National Forest in Ojai. Join us for an afternoon of guided nature walks, live music, benefit auction, and a gourmet barbeque supper under the oaks. For sponsorship opportunities, please contact diane@LPFW.org or call 805.617.4610 x2.

Photos left to right: Bill Bouton, Jeff Jones, and Tom Franklin
THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:

Institute, Russ Bishop Photography, Samy's Camera, Dexter's Camera, Lhumos, Color Services, Brooks Institute, Russ Bishop Photography, Patagonia, and Hooper Camera.

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CRITTER CORNER

The foothill yellow-legged frog (FYLF) was once widespread throughout the streams and rivers of the Los Padres National Forest, but today has been reduced to scattered populations in Monterey County. All southern populations have been extirpated, and the frog may disappear from the forest completely unless urgent steps are taken to identify and protect its habitat.

The frog is found in streams and rivers in foothill regions, and as its name implies, its legs and lower abdomen have a notable yellow color. Little is known about the frog’s behavior and ecology.

Historically, the FYLF was found in the coastal drainages in Santa Barbara County, but has not been seen in this area for several decades. We recorded last sightings in the Sespe, Sespe, and Santa Ynez River watersheds.

Nobody knows the exact cause of the frog’s decline, but major flooding in 1969 may have flushed out its entire habitat. Other contributing factors may include pesticides from agricultural practices, introduced predator species (fish haultlingis) that eat frog eggs and tadpoles, disease, habitat loss, and trampling and sedimentation by livestock and recreationalists along streams.

In 1994, the California Department of Fish & Game classified the FYLF as a “Species of Special Concern” due to the continued threats facing the species. The U.S. Forest Service also considers the FYLF as a “Sensitive Species,” requiring management consideration when proposing activities in its habitat on national forest land. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is currently considering whether to add the FYLF to the federal endangered species list.

PAGE 9
## CRITTER CORNER

### Oaks

Oaks are one of the defining features of the California landscape, and eleven of our state’s twenty oak species are found in the Los Padres National Forest. They range from shrubby oaks that grow just a few feet tall, to ancient oak trees that reach heights of up to 120 feet and diameters of up to twelve feet! Some oaks have survived for five centuries or more, making them some of the oldest living organisms in our region.

Oaks provide important wildlife habitat, scenic landscapes, shade for weary backcountry travelers, and stand as ancient sentinels of bygone eras. In addition, Native Americans have used oaks for centuries for medicinal, practical, and ceremonial purposes.

The Los Padres National Forest contains six of the state’s nine oak tree species: blue oak, valley oak, California black oak, coast live oak, interior live oak, and canyon oak – all distinguished from one another by the color of their bark, and whether they are shrubby, or grow just a few feet tall, or live as tall giants. The Los Padres also contains five shrub oak species that grow six to fifteen feet tall. Two other plants that are commonly called oaks – tanoak and poison oak – are not true oaks, but are close relatives in the beech and chestnut families.

Oaks within the Los Padres National Forest face several major threats: a disease called oak decline, lack of oak tree regeneration, and overgrazing within oak woodlands. Visit www.LPFW.org to read more about the oaks of the Los Padres and our efforts to protect them.

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### CONDOR CIRCLE TAKES FLIGHT

ForestWatch launches Condor Circle giving program.

As a nonprofit organization, ForestWatch’s efforts to preserve our region’s wild places and wildlife depend solely on the support of our members. To acknowledge and encourage this support, we launched the Condor Circle giving program this past summer with positive and encouraging results. The Condor Circle represents our most engaged and committed donors. These individuals and businesses generously donate $1,000 or more annually to ForestWatch, and serve as the core catalysts for our important work, allowing us to serve as one of our region’s most effective conservation forces.

Along with helping ForestWatch advance the scale, scope and pace of land and wildlife conservation in our region, Condor Circle members receive all the benefits enjoyed by ForestWatch members, along with a few exclusive benefits including: an annual Condor Circle member reception, invitation for a unique backcountry visit, recognition on our website, a commemorative bottle of wine from Condor’s Hope Vineyard, and a 50% discount on a one-time total purchase from our friends at Patagonia.

We would be pleased to welcome you as a new Condor Circle member. For more information, please contact Diane Devine at 805-617-4610 ext 2 or diane@LPFW.org.

Thank you for your support!

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### CONDOR CIRCLE Charter Member List

- Richard W. Alberts
- Griffin and Rachael Barkley
- Dave & Heide Boyden
- John & Kathy Broussard
- Tom & Betty Budlong
- Peter Castellanos & Danyel Dean
- Yvonne & Malinda Chouinard
- Bill Hart & Connie Eaton
- Louise Heydt
- Ruth Lasell & Robert Bonewitz
- Hollis Lenderking
- Stuart Meiklejohn & Mary Ann O’Connor
- Brad Momma
- Allan Morton & Paula Steinmetz
- Michael Mulligan & Joy Sawyer

### PROTECTING CONDOR ROOST TREES

ForestWatch defends old-growth trees used by endangered condors on Mt. Abel

In October, ForestWatch warned the U.S. Forest Service that a tree-cutting project on Mt. Abel – in the Ventura County backcountry – would harm California condors, in violation of federal laws that protect condor habitat. The endangered birds frequently use the trees for roosting and resting during long flights across the landscape.

As a result of the warning, the Forest Service agreed to avoid the roosting area – a half-mile buffer around them – until further notice.

The tree cutting is part of the Pine Mountain Club Project, a 1,365-acre vegetation clearing project in the Los Padres National Forest. The project – approved in 2008 – calls for the construction of a large fuel break on Cerro Noroeste (also known as Mt. Abel) measuring more than 500 feet wide and nearly 1.5 miles long, plus an additional 495 acres of forest thinning on the mountain top. The fuelbreak would cut through the middle of an active condor roosting area, where condors have perched on large trees and snags for centuries due to the unique environmental conditions of the area.

California condors rely on roost sites throughout their range for resting after long-distance flights across the landscape, and for protection during inclement weather. Traditional roosting sites are often located near important feeding and breeding areas. Condors return to the same roost site year after year, and many traditional roost sites – including Mt. Abel – have likely been used for centuries due to their location, microclimates, and tree characteristics. California condors often spend the majority of their time perched at a roost, preening and conducting other maintenance activities. Roosts may also serve an important social function, as condors usually roost in groups.

This is not the first time that ForestWatch has expressed concerns about this project. In 2008, ForestWatch appealed the project, challenging the Forest Service’s conclusion that the tree clearing “would have no effect on the California condor.” The Forest Service denied our appeal, and shortly thereafter, ForestWatch notified the agency that the project would violate the Endangered Species Act.

The most recent warning notice was filed by ForestWatch and our conservation partner, the Center for Biological Diversity, after ForestWatch uncovered significant new information and data regarding condor roosting in the area, further underestimating the importance of keeping the area intact.

While the condor roosts appear safe from the chainsaw for now, ForestWatch will continue to monitor this project to ensure that this important condor roosting area is protected. Safeguarding condor habitat throughout the forest will remain one of our top priorities.

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### PROTECTING CONDOR ROOST TREES

- Nutiva
- Jon, Erin, Lars & Evelyn Ohlgren
- Jack & Sheri Overall
- Jennifer Owyoung
- Patagonia
- Scott Renger
- Bill & Jill Shanbrom
- Virginia Sloan
- Martin & Elizabeth Stevenson
- Tom, Kerry & Kellin Weisel
- Richard Welch
- Richard & Paula White
- Ronald & Charlotte Williams
- Bob & Katy Zappella

Anonymous (2)

(through October 31, 2012)

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### JUNIPER RIDGE wildly real fragrance

The "wildly fragrant" company Juniper Ridge started at the Farmers’ Market in Berkeley, California back in 1998, where they began selling their various aromatic products. And since that time, the folks at Juniper Ridge have become, admittedly “obsessed with natural aromatics” and spend more time in the field than in the office, collecting greenery (in a sustainable and responsible way of course), and even distilling and making fragrances on the road.

From natural room sprays to soaps, essential oils to teas, everything made by Juniper Ridge comes from the mountains and deserts of the West.

But beyond their wonderful aromatic products, Juniper Ridge cares about our wild lands, donating 10% of their profits each year to groups like ForestWatch that work to defend Western wilderness. The wonderful folks at Juniper Ridge staff an event sponsored by our 2012 Ojai Wild! event, bringing with them their Wildflower Van and distilling the aromatic oils of black sage.

“Juniper Ridge supports Forest Watch because of its successful and tireless defense of the wild lands of Central California where many of our natural fragrances come from,” says Oli Kaufman, their Creative Projects Coordinator. “Juniper Ridge is proud to contribute to LPFW and include them in our portfolio of effective wilderness defense organizations.”

Our thanks to Juniper Ridge for their strong dedication to wilderness protection, and for making our office smell like a mountain forest!
LFPW MEMBERS’ GATHERING

Take a photographic journey of the Carrizo Plain on November 30 in San Luis Obispo

The Los Padres is currently littered with at least 72 target shooting sites that have unacceptable levels of environmental damage and waste, according to a report released by ForestWatch in November. More than half of these target shooting sites are in the Mt. Pinos Ranger District in Ventura County, and other sites are scattered in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties.

The worst of these sites are larger than an acre, near mountain streams, and contain large quantities of electronic waste and thousands of shotgun, rifle, and handgun bullet shells and casings. Nearly all shooting sites contain damaged or dead trees ridden with bullet holes. Vandalism repeated shoot at gun and bathrooms on federal land, costing taxpayers and cash-strapped agencies tens of thousands of dollars to repair.

Televisions and computer monitors are a favorite target, and they contain toxic chemicals that are released into the environment when the devices are shot. In addition, lead contamination poses a serious environmental concern at these shooting sites, as the lead from bullets and spent shells and casings accumulates in the soil and washes into nearby streams. Clay targets – another item frequently found at target shooting sites – contain lead and other toxins as well.

Target shooting has caused 42 wildfires in the Los Padres National Forest in the last ten years, destroying 74,382 acres of forest land. When certain types of bullets strike rocks or metal, they create a spark that may ignite dry brush. Adding to this wildfire danger, shooters often leave flammable objects like propane canisters and other exploding targets that pose a serious risk of igniting a wildfire.

While vast areas of the Los Padres remain open to target shooting, the three other national forests in southern California – the Angeles, San Bernardino, and Cleveland – have all issued closure orders banning target shooting outside of a few select, carefully-managed areas.

In 2006, the Forest Service approved a plan to close the Los Padres to target shooting (except for a handful of carefully-selected sites). However, the plan was never implemented, and the problem has only become worse. Three years ago, ForestWatch asked forest officials to take the final steps to implement this shooting moratorium, but they refused to do so.

Armed with the data from our surveys, we have renewed our request to institute a forest-wide ban on target shooting. Forest officials should implement such a closure immediately to prevent further environmental harm. ForestWatch recommends that shooters use the well-managed facilities at the formal gun clubs in and around the forest. Pack it in, pack it out!

To read the full report, visit our website at www.LPFW.org

Join Us!

November 30, Meadow Park Community Bldg, 2333 Meadow St, San Luis Obispo, 5:30 - 7:00 pm

RSVP to Diane diane@LPFW.org

HELPING HANDS

JON MONTGOMERY & JAKE SAHL

Each year, ForestWatch hosts a graduate student intern from UCSB’s Bren School of Environmental Science & Management. This summer, we had the good fortune of working with two of the Bren School’s finest, and we thank them for their hard work.

Jake Sahl (GIS Intern) grew up in LA and earned his degree in Geosciences from UCSB. He’s now studying water resources management and conservation planning at the Bren School, and is an avid rock climber, backpacker, hiker, and cross-country skier.

Jake spent hundreds of hours in the field for this summer, and he didn’t let a broken thumb slow him down (shh...don’t tell his doctor)! He traveled throughout the Los Padres, recording the locations of all target shooting sites and surveying for goshawk nests. Jake also streamlined our GIS computer workstations so that we can continue to use this emerging map-making technology to support our land conservation efforts.

Jon Montgomery (Conservation Intern) hails from the Great Lakes, where he earned a degree in psychology from the University of Wisconsin. He’s now studying conservation planning at the Bren School. Jon plays guitar in several local Santa Barbara bands.

With a knack for tackling voluminous amounts of documents while maintaining his sanity, Jon poured through thousands of pages of oil well records dating back to the 1950s, and single-handedly uncovered the use of controversial fracking practices in the Los Padres National Forest! He also researched the elusive Mt. Pinos sooty grouse, and monitored the Carrizo Plain for grazing impacts.
Looking Across the Forest
An Update on How We’re Protecting Your Region

CARRIZO TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PLAN
ForestWatch and our conservation partners submitted detailed comments on the Bureau of Land Management’s preparation of a Travel Management Plan for the Carrizo Plain National Monument.

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN
ForestWatch filed a formal protest challenging the Bureau of Land Management’s failure to formally establish enough Areas of Critical Environmental Concern on lands adjacent to the Los Padres National Forest.

PROTECTING CONDOR ROOST TREES
ForestWatch warned the U.S. Forest Service that a tree-cutting project on Mt. Abel would harm California condors, in violation of federal laws that protect condor habitat. The endangered birds frequently use the trees for roosting and resting during long flights across the landscape. (PAGE 8)

INCREASING FINES FOR FOREST LAWBREAKERS
The fines levied against lawbreakers who are caught and cited for criminal activity in the Los Padres National Forest have been increased significantly, giving law enforcement officers the tools they need to adequately protect forest resources from environmental damage. (PAGE 9)

PROTECTING ARROYO TOADS
ForestWatch submitted detailed comments to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, opposing a proposal to remove protections for endangered arroyo toads in the Los Padres National Forest.

TARGET SHOOTING TRASHES FOREST
A ForestWatch investigation revealed that the oil industry has injected harmful chemicals deep beneath the Los Padres National Forest for decades, and that the controversial practice – known as “fracking” – is making a resurgence. Seven wells in the Sespe Oil Field have been fracked in the last two years, and ForestWatch has demanded a moratorium until adequate safeguards are in place to protect water supplies. (PAGE 2)

CHERRY CREEK VOLUNTEER CLEANUP
Last year, after the Forest Service closed this trash-filled shooting area, more than eighty ForestWatch volunteers removed more than 2.5 tons of trash, making it the area’s largest cleanup effort to date and one of the largest trash cleanups ever organized in Los Padres National Forest history. We returned to the area on November 3 to clean up the area for good. (BACK PAGE)

SPOTTED OWL & GOSHAWK PROTECTION
Summertime surveys prompted by ForestWatch resulted in the first confirmed detections of rare California spotted owls on Frazier Mountain. A northern goshawk nest site was also discovered, confirming that this rare bird nests here as well. Their habitat will now be protected.

PROTECTING ROADLESS AREAS
ForestWatch submitted detailed comments to the Forest Service this summer, asking forest officials to consider protecting certain Inventoried Roadless Areas in the Los Padres National Forest and recommending them for formal wilderness designation. The Forest Service plans to release its revised proposal in 2013.

RESTORING STEELHEAD TO THE SISQUOC
ForestWatch reviewed the first-ever study showing that increased streamflows in the Santa Maria River are needed so that endangered steelhead have enough water to swim to prime spawning habitat in the Sisquoc River. We then asked the California Department of Fish & Game to recommend water releases from a dam upstream to facilitate steelhead migration.

HAPPY CANYON GRAZING ALLOTMENT
ForestWatch urged forest officials to better protect wildlife and oak trees near Figueroa Mountain from the impacts of livestock grazing, and is currently reviewing a recent decision to continue livestock grazing here for another decade.

TARGET SHOOTING TRASHES FOREST
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In July, more than fifty ForestWatch members attended our first-ever Members’ Gathering. We’ll be organizing future gatherings each quarter, as a way for our members throughout the Central Coast to come together and celebrate the national forest.

Our inaugural Santa Barbara gathering featured wine from Bedwin Winery, tasty appetizers, and an opportunity to meet local backcountry enthusiast Craig R. Carey and author of the recently-published Hiking and Backpacking Santa Barbara & Ventura. Mr. Carey provided a talk and slide show about the great destinations our local backcountry has to offer, and gave an account of his own adventures out in the field while writing his book.

Join us in San Luis Obispo for our next Members’ Gathering on Friday, November 30 at the Meadow Park Community Building. This free event for current ForestWatch members will feature speaker Bill Boulton, who will take us on a photographic journey of the Carrizo Plain.

Bill moved to San Luis Obispo in 1997 from southwestern Michigan, where he taught biology and began his photographic adventures. Much of his photography was done with the intent to share with students his experiences in nature. While teaching, some of his greatest joys came while taking others into natural settings. He has led trips to many areas in the United States and around the world.

One of his favorite places, even before relocating to California, was the Carrizo Plain, and since arriving here, he has come to appreciate the Plain’s wonders even more. Bill appreciates the chance to share the Carrizo Plain with those who are familiar with it and with those who aren’t, and in this presentation he will highlight characteristic scenic vistas, flora and fauna of San Luis Obispo County’s very own national monument.

We hope you’ll join us for this enlightening evening, focusing on one of the most dramatic landscapes found in California. Watch for more information on this event soon. Space is limited and the event is only open to current ForestWatch members. If your membership is not current, you can renew now at www.LPFW.org, or become a new member for a special new members’ gathering rate of only $20. We’ll see you in SLO on November 30!

Generously sponsored by our friends at Pozo Organic Farm.

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Bill moved to San Luis Obispo in 1997 from southwestern Michigan, where he taught biology and began his photographic adventures. Much of his photography was done with the intent to share with students his experiences in nature. While teaching, some of his greatest joys came while taking others into natural settings. He has led trips to many areas in the United States and around the world.

One of his favorite places, even before relocating to California, was the Carrizo Plain, and since arriving here, he has come to appreciate the Plain’s wonders even more. Bill appreciates the chance to share the Carrizo Plain with those who are familiar with it and with those who aren’t, and in this presentation he will highlight characteristic scenic vistas, flora and fauna of San Luis Obispo County’s very own national monument.

We hope you’ll join us for this enlightening evening, focusing on one of the most dramatic landscapes found in California. Watch for more information on this event soon. Space is limited and the event is only open to current ForestWatch members. If your membership is not current, you can renew now at www.LPFW.org, or become a new member for a special new members’ gathering rate of only $20. We’ll see you in SLO on November 30!

Generously sponsored by our friends at Pozo Organic Farm.
Oaks are one of the defining features of the California landscape, and eleven of our state's twenty oak species are found in the Los Padres National Forest. They range from shrubby oaks that grow just a few feet tall, to ancient oak trees that can reach heights of up to 120 feet and diameters of up to twelve feet! Some oaks have survived for five centuries or more, making them some of the oldest living organisms in our region.

Oaks provide important wildlife habitat, scenic landscapes, shade for weary backcountry travelers, and stand as ancient sentries of bygone eras. In addition, Native Americans have used oaks for centuries for medicinal, practical, and ceremonial purposes.

The Los Padres National Forest contains six of the state's nine oak tree species: blue oak, valley oak, California black oak, coast live oak, interior live oak, and canyon oak – all distinguished from one another by the shapes of their leaves, acorns, and branches, the color of their bark, and whether they are evergreen or deciduous.

The Los Padres also contains five shrub oak species that grow six to fifteen feet tall. Two other plants that are commonly called oaks – tanoak and poison oak – are not true oaks, but are close relatives in the beech and chestnut families.

Oaks within the Los Padres National Forest face several major threats: a disease called oak wilt, chestnut blight, and overgrazing within oak woodlands.

As a nonprofit organization, ForestWatch's efforts to preserve our region's wild places and wildlife depend solely on the support of our members. To acknowledge and encourage this support, we launched the Condor Circle giving program this past summer with positive and encouraging results. The Condor Circle represents our most engaged and committed donors. These individuals and businesses generously donate $1,000 or more annually to ForestWatch, and serve as the core catalysts for our important work, allowing us to serve as one of our region's most effective conservation forces.

Along with helping ForestWatch advance the scale, scope and pace of land and wildlife conservation in our region, Condor Circle members receive all the benefits enjoyed by ForestWatch members, along with a few exclusive benefits including: an annual Condor Circle member reception, invitation for a unique backcountry visit, recognition on our website, a commemorative bottle of wine from Condor’s Hope Vineyard, and a 50% discount on a one-time total purchase from our friends at Patagonia.

We would be pleased to welcome you as a new Condor Circle member. For more information, please contact Diane Devine at 805-617-4610 ext 2 or diane@LPFW.org.

Thank you for soaring with us!
The Los Padres was not alone. In 2009, half of all federal land managers surveyed nationwide reported that "fines are insufficient to deter illegal or unsafe OHV [off-highway vehicle] use" on public lands.

In May, the fine schedule was updated and we’re pleased to report that the Los Padres National Forest now has one of the strongest penalty schedules in the nation! Many serious violations that previously resulted in only $50-$200 fines now require mandatory court appearances. Instead of getting the violation dismissed after paying a fine, lawbreakers now have to appear before a judge, who – depending on the circumstances – can levy fines as high as $5,000 or six months in jail for certain offenses.

We hope that the new fines will give law enforcement officers – who are stretched thin by budget cuts and staffing shortages – the tools they need to enforce important regulations that ensure the protection of the land, wildlife, water, and public safety in the Los Padres National Forest. Please join us in thanking the Forest Service, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and Santa Barbara County for their efforts to protect the Los Padres National Forest.

Fifty dollars. Until recently, that was the fine levied against lawbreakers who were caught and cited for criminal activity in the Los Padres National Forest. The fines were so low that they did not deter unlawful behavior, even for serious violations causing long-term environmental damage.

For example, the fine for using motorized dirt bikes in a Congressionally-designated wilderness area was only $50 in the Los Padres National Forest – amounting to a slap on the wrist. Equally as shocking, the fine for throwing a burning cigarette out of a car window was only $75. Similarly low fines were imposed for timber theft, damaging or removing resources, littering, polluting streams, and using motorized vehicles off of designated routes.

Historically, the FYLL was found in the coastal drainages in Santa Barbara County, but has not been seen in this area for several decades. Little is known about the frog’s biology and ecology.

Critter Corner

The foothill yellow-legged frog (FYLL) was once widespread throughout the streams and rivers of the Los Padres National Forest, but today has been reduced to scattered populations in Monterey County. All southern populations have been extirpated, and the frog may disappear from the forest completely unless urgent steps are taken to identify, protect, and study the species.

The frog is found in streams and rivers in foothill regions, and as its name implies, its legs and lower abdomen have a notable yellow color. Little is known about the frog’s biology and ecology.

Nobody knows the exact cause of the frog’s decline, but major flooding in 1969 may have flushed out its entire habitat. Other contributing factors may include pesticides from agricultural practices, introduced predator species (fish, bullfrogs) that eat frog eggs and tadpoles, disease, habitat loss, and trampling and sedimentation by livestock and recreationists along streams.

In 1994, the California Department of Fish & Game classified the FYLL as a "Species of Special Concern" due to the continued threats facing the species. The U.S. Forest Service also considers the FYLL as a "Sensitive Species," requiring management consideration when proposing activities in its habitat on national forest land. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is currently considering whether to add the FYLL to the federal endangered species list.

For several decades, the oil industry has focused on the extraction of harmful chemicals deep beneath the Los Padres National Forest in Ventura County’s Sespe Oil Field, and the controversial practice – known as hydraulic fracturing – is now making a resurgence. The practice was uncovered during a yearlong investigation by ForestWatch.

Hydraulic fracturing – commonly known as "fracking" – is a process whereby water, sand, and various chemical additives are pumped thousands of feet underground to break apart rock formations and stimulate the extraction of oil and gas. The technique has come under increasing scrutiny due to concerns with groundwater contamination, air pollution, and public health. Hundreds of fracking chemicals are known to be toxic, and several are known or suspected to cause cancer.

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We’ll continue to track all regulatory efforts, and will demand full disclosure of fracking chemicals and adequate safeguards to protect water quality and the environment.

To read the full report, visit www.LPFW.org

The controversial oil extraction technique is making a resurgence in the Sespe Oil Field, threatening downstream water supplies.

Sespe Oil Field is located in and adjacent to the Los Padres National Forest north of the town of Fillmore in Ventura County. It contains nearly 300 active oil wells on federal and private land, according to data provided by the DOGGR. The oil field is also adjacent to the Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge and the Sespe Condor Sanctuary, the Coldwater Canyon Ecological Reserve, and the Sespe Wild & Scenic River, the latter of which is designated as critical habitat for the federally-endangered southern steelhead.

The public deserves to know what types of chemicals are being pumped into our groundwater, and what impact those chemicals have on our water supplies, wildlife, and the environment. ForestWatch will continue to track all regulatory efforts, and will demand full disclosure of fracking chemicals and adequate safeguards to protect water quality and the environment.

To read the full report, visit www.LPW.org

An oil well is drilled as part of a fracking operation in the Sespe Oil Field this summer
Thank you to everyone who participated in our Wilderness & Wild River Photo Contest. We received dozens of spectacular images featuring proposed or existing wilderness areas and wild rivers. Congratulations to our winners!

**Photo Contest**

**Thank you to everyone who participated in our Wilderness & Wild River Photo Contest. We received dozens of spectacular images featuring proposed or existing wilderness areas and wild rivers. Congratulations to our winners!**

**Best Overall in Contest:**
- James Fortman, First Crossing Santa Ynez River, Paradise Road

**Landscape Category:**
- James Fortman, First Crossing Santa Ynez River, Paradise Road

**Wildlife Category:**
- Zack Abbey, Spirit of the Sespe, Sespe Wilderness

**People Category:**
- Charles Graham, Self-Portrait, Sespe Wilderness

**People's Choice:**
- Victoria Van Trees, Nighttime illumination, Sespe Wilderness

**Thanks to Our Judges:**
- Jeff Jones, Ralph Clevergen, Russ Bishop and Tim Davis

**Thanks to Our Sponsors:**
- Sammy's Camera, Dexter's Camera, Lumnos, Color Services, Brooks Institute, Russ Bishop Photography, Patagonia, and Hooper Camera

**As I write this, our nation is going to the polls and voting for our next President. It's unclear who will win, but one thing's for certain: we have our work cut out for us. Both major candidates did not once mention the importance of public lands and wildlife conservation.**

Our national forests are the places we go to get away from it all and enjoy ourselves in the outdoors. These lands also provide valuable economic benefits - outdoor recreation, land conservation, ecological restoration, and visitor services support numerous local jobs in our communities. And forests provide our towns and farms with clean water supplies, drive our property values, provide us with open space and wildlife habitat, and enhance our quality of life.

As we decide on the future direction of our country, our national forests need a voice now more than ever before. A voice to push back against the special interests that want to exploit our forests and plunder our natural resources for short-term commercial gain.

Right here in our own backyard, ForestWatch is that voice. From the Central Coast to Washington DC, ForestWatch works every day to ensure that our decision-makers and land managers make the best decisions for the health of our region's wild lands.

You make our voice a powerful one. Together, we must constantly remind our decision-makers why it is so important to protect our public lands.

For the forest,
Protecting wildlife and wild places along California’s Central Coast

Los Padres ForestWatch

Join us for some tasty appetizers, wine and beer as we take a photographic journey of the Carrizo Plain with local photographer and ForestWatch member Bill Bouton. His photos capture the wildflowers, wildlife, and landscapes of San Luis Obispo’s only national monument. This event is FREE for current ForestWatch members. The gathering takes place at Meadow Park in SLO from 5:30 to 7:00pm. For more information, see page 7 inside this issue. Space is limited, so contact diane@LPFW.org to RSVP today!

Celebrate the holidays with ForestWatch and renowned photographer Jeff Jones at his new Lumnos Gallery. His December exhibit, Wilderness, Home, will highlight wild landscapes here at home. Mention LPFW when purchasing a Jeff Jones gallery print in December and 50% of that sale will benefit ForestWatch. Holiday party features appetizers, wine, and yuletide cheer from 5:00 to 7:30pm. Space is limited to current LPFW members and their guests. Contact diane@LPFW.org to RSVP today!

Mark your calendar for our 6th Annual Ojai Wild! creekside barbeque on Saturday, April 13, 2013 from 3 to 6pm. It’s our most important fundraising event of the year, and takes place at The Thacher School’s picturesque Diamond Hitch Camp along the foothills of the Los Padres National Forest in Ojai. Join us for an afternoon of guided nature walks, live music, benefit auction, and a gourmet barbeque supper under the oaks. For sponsorship opportunities, please contact diane@LPFW.org or call 805.617.4610 x2.

Photos left to right: Bill Bouton, Jeff Jones, and Tom Franklin

Join us!
Upcoming Events

ForestWatch Members’ Gathering
November 30, San Luis Obispo

ForestWatch Holiday Party
December 13, Santa Barbara

Save the Date - Ojai Wild!
April 13, Ojai

Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper

First Crossing Santa Ynez River, Paradise Road

Photo James Fortman