Mission Bay Park: Picnics or profits?

By Scott Andrews, Alliance to Save Mission Bay Park

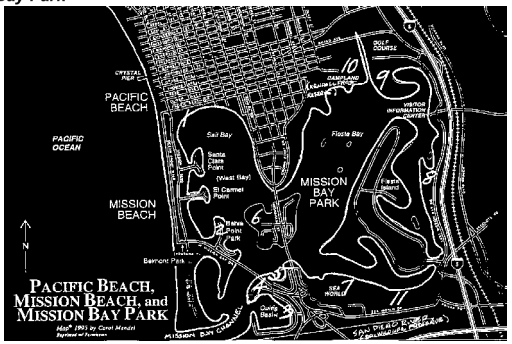
Mission Bay Park on state tidelands is facing ruin. This irreplaceable open space is visited by 15 million people a year (Yosemite: 3.8 million). An additional 15 million must use grid-locked city streets to reach San Diego's ocean beaches. The park has beautiful vistas across Mission Bay to the pacific.

With six hotels and SeaWorld, the park is already California's most commercialized state park. Park traffic is jammed and summer sigalerts continually warn coastal visitors to avoid the area's full parking lots.

The Mission Bay Park Master Plan recommends needed picnic areas, children's play areas, public parking, a tram system, primitive overnight camping, a nature center, wetlands restoration to filter polluted bay waters, new habitat for the park's seven endangered species and recreational facilities.

The 1999 Grand Jury reported park mismanagement, over-commercialization, and failure to build public facilities. The city has funded only $3 million of the Master Plan–recommended $171 million to improve public access. Instead, the city manager's office has supported:

1. **Dana Inn:** An expansion of 80 rooms, a major banquet facility and 2.5 acres of Sunset Point.
2. **Quivira Basin:** Two new resort hotels totaling 850 rooms, a retail strip, four to eight restaurants and expansion through the Alternative Least Tern Nesting Area and along the Southern Wildlife Preserve.
3. **SeaWorld:** Anheuser Busch Corporation of St. Louis is proceeding with expansion plans for 90–foot tall thrill rides, a convention center, a four-story parking structure, widening SeaWorld Drive to six lanes and a proposed 950–room, high–rise hotel.
4. **De Anza Point:** A 300–room resort hotel/marina and a 300–room time share development. The Master Plan calls for the area to be used "foremost to improve bay water quality" with new wetlands.



**Potential Exansions of major commercial developments

1. Catamaran Hotel
2. Bahia Resort Hotel**
3. Quivira Basin Hotels (2)**
4. Hyatt Islandia Hotel
5. Dana Inn**
6. Paradise Point Hotel
7. Sea World Hotel & Expansion**
8. Hilton Hotel**
9. De Anza Cove Resort Hotels (2)**
10. Campland
11. Mission Bay Landfill/ Class 1 Toxic Industrial Waste Dump

Hotels and SeaWorld are major traffic generators. The city Traffic and Engineering Dept. says each hotel room creates 10 vehicle trips per day. Studies for Quivira Basin projects state they would add 13,000 daily trips, tripling area traffic. Air pollution levels, tied to stop–and–go traffic and cold starts in parking lots, would also triple.

The coast has an inversion layer that traps vehicle exhaust pollutants. Other proposed developments would add to the problems.

Public needs should be considered first on this public land and in the city's operation of the park. The Alliance to Save Mission Bay Park supports a moratorium on any more commercial development in the park.* ■

**(Note: Sierra Club has not entertained the concept of such a moratorium.)*

David Brower: Hiker, Climber, Hero

By Geoffrey Smith

David Brower was a friend of mine.

In fact, I believe most of us can say that. We met on several occasions over the past 15 years or so. Our last meeting was at the California Wilderness Conference this past summer in Sacramento. There he was, possibly the greatest environmentalist of all time, sitting dignified, alone in his wheel chair in the midst of the hustle and bustle of the event. So I walked over to him, and got down on my knees to talk (feeling somehow correct in doing so). I wanted to thank David for something.

I thanked David for being a person whom I could talk to. From the look in his eyes, and the smile on his face, I could tell he wanted to talk with me, too. While Dave Foreman (founder of Earth First), Jim Eaton (founder of California Wilderness Coalition) and all the others scurried off to meetings and networking sessions, there was David Brower chatting with me.

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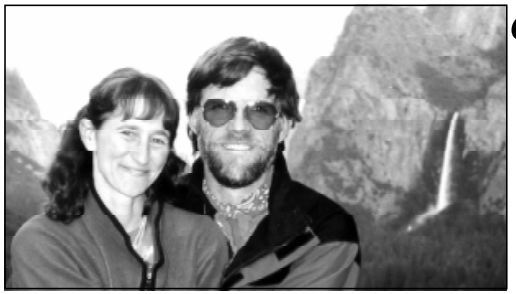

'One Club'

By Geoffrey Smith, chapter conservation coordinator

Conservation Coordinator Geoffrey Smith and his activist wife, Camille, on a recent outing to Yosemite, are San Diego's dynamic duo when it comes to environmental activism.

Warning! *This conservation column contains references to backpacking and other outdoor sports!*

One Earth, One Chance, One Club. The Power of One. One Step at a Time. Webster's defines One as: "being in agreement or union" and "constituting a unified entity of two or more components."

The concept of oneness is as old as time itself, and yet as difficult to achieve now as it ever was. One Club in the Sierra Club means combining our resources in outings, outreach, education, and activism to achieve the important goal of protecting our Earth. That is the theme of this column, and of my involvement. I encourage you to join with me.

- David Brower was one heck of a guy. If ever there was a model for the One Club concept, he was The One. Please read my article about David starting on the previous page. David is gone from this earth, but his legend lives on.
- The world recently mourned the savage vandal cutting of Luna, Julia Butterfly Hill's tree-sit home for over two years. Julia continues to spread her message of love and action throughout the nation. Come see the movie, 'Butterfly', about her experiences 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 30 at Twiggs Coffee Shop. Julia will be in San Diego on Friday, May 11 at SDSU.
- I hope you can come to our first benefit living room concert, featuring Caren Armstrong, on Saturday, Feb. 3. Time to relax, enjoy friends and music, and celebrate life's riches. See page 8 for details

I've been a chapter outing leader (COL) for nearly 20 years now, giving me pause to consider our responsibility as stewards of our planet earth...

X/C Skiing in Bear Valley: Will club testimony result in a strong US Forest Service Roadless Area Proposal, now on Clinton's desk?

X/C Skiing in Yosemite: Will club comments on the Yosemite Valley and Merced River Plans result in reduced development and increased habitat protection for this precious resource?

Backpacking in Hauser Canyon: Will our efforts to influence the county's General Plan 2020 Update provide much-needed resource protections in our backcountry?

My Heroes:

Devore Smith - My dad. Clergyman, educator, ExCom member, father, guide. He actively works on landuse and parks issues, and runs our sound system at events. I am proud of this , and continue to be inspired by him.

Edie Harmon - Goddess of Imperial County, and her humble side-kick Jim Harmon, turned the mining industry on its ear by winning important court decisions. She may have single-handedly gutted the destructive and antiquated 1872 Mining Law.

Connie Garcia - founder of our Border Issues Committee, is breaking new ground working with Mexico-based environmental groups.

I'll see you on the trail!

Geoffrey Smith, Conservation Coordinator

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DAVID BROWER • 1912-2000

Nothing less than the fate of the world in his hands, and David Brower was taking time to listen to what this volunteer of little renown had to say. I thanked David for showing people like me that the most sincere manifestation of greatness is in a person's ability to listen to the little people, those who have not yet done great things but want to, and to help them to fly. He smiled, and nodded, and looked around the room at hundreds of activists flying this way and that, and saw that he had done well.

That was David Brower - he was the greatest.

He had, the sharp eyes of a visionary man, who achieved 70 first ascents in the Sierra Nevada; the voice of a powerful, big man who could 'scream without raising his voice'; the hearing of a legendary man, who had heard it all before, yet would listen to the newest, youngest volunteer with keen interest and enthusiasm.

A proud man, who fixed waffles on Sunday mornings for his friends and associates. A gentle man, whose mere presence evoked awe among admirers, and flight response among those who would damage our Earth Mother by their actions.

I will be looking to the mountains for the next David Brower. S/he will likely be wearing a backpack and climbing harness. ■