

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
San Diego Chapter Newsletter

CHAPTER MEETING

Tuesday, May 19
Casa del Prado, Balboa Park
Room 104, 7:00 p.m.



Overview of the CAL FIRE Urban and Community Forestry Program

by Lynnette Short

In this presentation, Lynnette will briefly touch on the function of CAL FIRE before illustrating the details of the Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) Program, which will include a description of California's Urban Forests. The purpose of the U&CF Program is to establish and maintain optimal urban and community forests to help improve the quality of life of urban citizens and the quality of urban natural resources. To accomplish this, CAL FIRE's Regional Urban Foresters provide information, education, and assistance to local governments, non-profits, private sector organizations, and the general public that help to advance Urban Forestry per the Urban Forestry Act of 1978, updated in 2010 (PRC 4799.06 – 4799.12). The structure and delivery of the U&CF Program is built upon cooperative relationships with and technical assistance to local governments, non-profit organizations, and private companies. As one mechanism for encouraging better U&CF management practices, the Program provides grants with bond funds

for the many economic, environmental, and social benefits that urban society gains from urban and community forests. For example, grants are issued for tree planting, comprehensive urban forest management plans, tree resource inventories, educational programs, and innovative ideas that promote Urban Forestry in California.

Lynnette will also discuss the sustainability component of the Program, as well as her work with other State agencies and researchers to develop a carbon sequestration protocol and companion accounting protocol for U&CF in the emerging carbon credit trading market. These protocols have been officially adopted by the California Climate Action Registry and the California Air Resources Board.

6:30 p.m. – Natives for Novices. Presentation: "Strategies for Establishing Native Plants from Seeds" by **Lee Gordon**. The next installment on hard-to-germinate seeds. Learn what works, and produce your own native plants for your garden.

7:00 p.m. – refreshments, browsing, socializing.

7:30 p.m. – presentation.

Chapter meetings are free and open to the public. They are held in the Casa del Prado, just west of the Natural History Museum, in Balboa Park.



Island mallow (*Lavatera assurgentifolia*). Native to the Channel Islands of California. Photo by Bobbie Stephenson during the Garden Native Tour.

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embedded links!

Lynnette Short, the speaker for the May Chapter Meeting, serves as the State's Regional Urban Forester for San Diego, Imperial and Orange counties. She has a Bachelor's degree in Forestry & Natural Resource Management from Cal Poly - San Luis Obispo. She started her career with CAL FIRE in 2003 as a firefighter and later took a Resource Management position in San Diego. She has been with the U&CF Program since 2006.

Though we didn't get to the top, we found a boulder where we could see a tiny bit of Cuyamaca Peak to the north, and deep into Mexico to the south.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

**Ann Beaton
Justin Daniel
Theresa Everett
Melinda Graper
Pamela Haas
Jean Jancaitis
Jennifer Janors
Di Marcus**

**Kevin Mock
Carey O'Rielly
Brenda Richmond
Linda Smith
Tyler Suttle
Terressa Whitaker
Ronette Youmans**



(Thanks to Phil Roullard for his fine photos.)

BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, May 6, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. 4010 Morena Blvd, Suite 100, San Diego (Thomas Guide 1248 C4). CNPS-SD Executive Board meetings are always the first Wednesday of the month, except when the 1st falls on a holiday. Members are welcome to attend as observers. If you wish to discuss an issue, please email president@cnpsd.org to get your issue on the agenda.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

Bonding With Nature's Gardens

The Chapter field trip in March 2015 up the Espinosa Trail toward Corte Madera Peak didn't reach the peak, but we had a fabulous day of plant discovery. We saw over fifty species of plants in flower, and many more were budding. The universal favorite was *Acmispon* (=Lotus) *grandiflorus* that graced the bouldery edges of the trail.



Large leaved lotus (*Acmispon* (=Lotus) *grandiflorus*)

Sadly, four potential chapter field trips this year dried on the vine due to the drought, one of which was planned for the July 4 weekend, camping in the southern Sierra Nevada. The lack of snowpack has made the situation there dire. The rivers and streams are drying up. Wells are drying up. While this is just a disappointment for us, the plants that have graced those high meadows and canyons for centuries may be tragically harmed. We can only hope that summer monsoonal rainfall may help prop them up. The changing climate is unpredictable at this point.

CNPS members who seek out native plants in their native homes always discover joy in experiencing the astonishing vitality of San Diego's many wild places. This year the Chapter field trips have been bolstered by non-members from our new Meetup group "San Diego County Native Plant Discoverers". I hope both members and non-members continue to go out to wild places in order to foster deep bonds to our natural heritage.

I love native plant gardens, and was delighted at the fantastic turnout for the Garden Native Tour. But native plant gardens, in most places, are surrounded by oceans of indifferent or hostile land uses. Worse, when a caring gardener moves or passes away, their native garden falls under the dominion of the next owners, who typically rip it out.

I stopped feeling heartbroken about this inevitable fate years ago, and came to just accept that it is the way things are. But this reality also strengthens my commitment to conserve the natives in their original natural places, because only through strong conservation terms on the deed of that land, will it possibly endure. CNPS members who have come to love our native flora

in its native homes have been effective in implementing strong conservation programs. These are the only assurance that California's flora and its dependent fauna will be here when we all have returned to dust.

I'll end this rambling column with a heartfelt request: I have been field trip chair for seven years, and decided that a new chapter member needs to become the field trip chair for 2016. I will be glad to help a new chair by sharing my experience and how-to's to plan and offer field trips in greater San Diego County in 2016.

~ Kay Stewart, Field Trip Chair

TECOLOTE CANYON NATURAL PARK



May 3; 8 a.m. to noon. Meet at the Tecolote Nature Center on the first Sunday of the month. Wear sun protection and comfortable walking shoes; bring water. Rain at 8 a.m. cancels. Directions: exit I-5 at Seaworld/Tecolote exit. Go east (away from Mission Bay) on Tecolote, past the ball fields, along the driveway to the very end. Free and open to the public.

RARE PLANTS

San Diego Rare Plant Update: Blair Valley Peppergrass (*Lepidium flavum* var. *felipensis*)

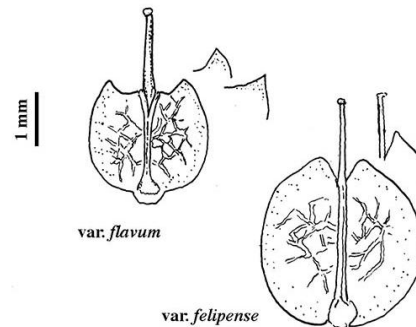
On consequence of the publication of the second edition of the Jepson Manual to Higher Vascular Plants has been that some plants listed in the CNPS Rare and Endangered Plant Inventory are no longer recognized by its authors. This inconsistency eventually leads to a review on whether the plant should continue to be recognized or deleted from the CNPS Inventory. A proposal is presented to the Rare Plant Forum and experts weigh in on the question. This winter, one of the San Diego County rare plants was up for discussion, Blair Valley peppergrass (*Lepidium flavum* var. *felipensis*).

Formerly known as Borrego Valley peppergrass, this low, yellow-flowered annual is a member of the mustard family (Brassicaceae). It is known with certainty only from Blair Valley and Little Blair Valley of Anza-Borrego State Park despite historical claims for San Felipe Creek and Borrego Valley (Larry Hendrickson and Tom Chester were quick to point out on the Rare Plant Forum that

despite the name "Borrego Valley peppergrass" its occurrence in the Borrego Valley and San Felipe Creek areas may have more to do with poor locality data on old specimens than actual occurrence, hence the new name "Blair Valley peppergrass" to identify it with the one place we know for certain it occurs). The CNPS Inventory and the California Natural Diversity Data Base include this taxon as California Rare Plant Rank 1B.2 for its rarity and threats from recreational activities and vehicles.

In the second edition of the Jepson Manual (Baldwin edit. 2013), Al-Shehbaz, the author for *Lepidium*, did not recognize *L.f.* var. *felipensis*. In his Flora North America treatment, he offers "*The slightly smaller-fruited form of Lepidium flavum, recognized by C.L. Hitchcock (1936) and R.C. Rollins (1993) as var. felipense, does not merit recognition.*" Not the most satisfying explanation, especially considering *L.f.* var. *felipense* actually has larger fruits, not smaller fruits.

Aside from getting the fruit size wrong, a clear oversight on behalf of the author, there are other reasons to recognize *L.f.* var. *felipense*. Munz (1957) points out that the style is proportionally shorter in Blair Valley peppergrass and that the tips of the fruit on either side of the style are typically rounded and relatively close to the style while those of the more widespread taxon *L.f.* var. *flavum* are sharply pointed and widely separated from the style, almost appearing as horns (see diagram).



The two taxa are also geographically separated with the southernmost *L.f.* var. *flavum* known from Joshua Tree National Monument. Later treatments (Munz 1974, Beauchamp 1986, Rollins 1993 [Jepson I]) focus on the difference in fruit size and relative style length. Only Shreve & Wiggins (1964) mention both the fruit tip shape as well.

The relative length of the style appears to be a minor character, perhaps less consistent, but the larger size of the fruit and the rounded vs. horned tips are good characters. A hand lens isn't even necessary to see the difference (a rare quality in subtaxa!). One reason the Jepson author may not have given the variety much

credit is the lack of Blair Valley peppergrass specimens to review. There just are not many specimens available in herbarium collections. Another might be that he never had an opportunity to see the plant in the field. It is more difficult to make taxonomic decisions with few specimens to work with. As it turns out, the variety may not be endemic to San Diego County. Specimens I examined at San Diego that were obtained in Baja California clearly were associated with the Blair Valley form and not the widespread form.

The discussion on the Rare Plant Forum in December and January was lively and interesting (at least to a rare plant botanist). Virtually everyone who commented agreed that Blair Valley peppergrass should be retained. Today, if you pull up the Inventory (www.rareplants.cnps.org) you will still find this plant among California's ever increasing rank of threatened plants.

~ Fred M. Roberts, Rare Plant Botanist



Lepidium flavum var. *flavum*. Photo from Calflora; © 2004 Christopher L. Christie.

CONSERVATION

Conservation Committee

May 5. Meets the first Tuesday evening of each month. Contact **Frank Landis** at raresurvey@cnpsd.org for the location.

Spring Crunch

Hopefully, it being April, you've done your spring cleaning, cleared out your Closet of Anxieties (anyone remember Bloom County?). Life is good in your world, I hope? Well, I've got some new anxieties for you. Just a few. Let me update you on what the conservation committee has been dealing with recently.

It's been a fairly annoying spring for me, to be honest. There are a bunch of developments popping up, and there's the drought. Oh, and there's the Urban Forest Management Plan. And the City of San Diego's Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan, and there was even the Del Mar Mesa/Carmel Mountain Natural Resource Management Plan and Trails Plan. Actually, the last wouldn't have made me so grumpy if I wasn't trying to

finish a manuscript, but whatever. Volunteering isn't supposed to be fun or easy, it's just supposed to get important stuff done. Right? Isn't that why you volunteer?

Why are things so busy? Depending on who you listen to, it's either the high point of the eighteen year development cycle, or the economy's improving, or there's a lot of global money sloshing around, or there's a bunch of old men trying to get 20 year-old projects built while they're still alive. Whatever the cause, there are a bunch of developments marching down what City Planning calls the pipeline, which tells you what they think should happen. Yes, the Church of Growth is Good isn't just singing its Hallelujahs, it's got local reporters singing that growth is inevitable, too. Unfortunately, that means more work for those of us who comment on environmental documents.

Can we stop the growth train? By ourselves, no. With the ongoing drought? That gets more interesting, in the sense of "may you live in interesting times."

Still, it's worth looking at what passes for innovation in developments. I live in the Carmel Valley, the epicenter of current development. So far as I know, the projects for this area have been in the planning for 20 years or more. The proposals were passed by the voters back in the 1990s. Years ago the voters said it was okay to add more traffic onto the clogged Highway 56 even before its junction to northbound I-5 was completed. And since the City planners of yore calculated out how many schools, parks, fire stations, police stations, etc. people needed, all that is left is for their buddy landowners, who also sit on those planning boards, to go ahead and make their profit.

Yeah. Even when the residents are screaming that the planners got the calculations are wrong, the planning board says the Plan Must Go Forward. It was voted on, you silly little people.

If I sound cynical about it, it's because, even with the noise about the benefits of infill development, out in Carmel Valley we're still building as if it were the 1990s. In the Merge 56 and Rhodes Crossing developments that are right up against the Del Mar Mesa Preserve (well, actually the development's going to dump a lot of fill into the edge of the Preserve, but apparently that's okay, because Growth is Good), there's no public transportation. There's little room for solar panels, and some of the locals are arguing for bigger roads. Suburbs and big cars. Hallelujah.

Since I live in the area, I'm just shaking my head. What I think will come out of this latest bulldozing is a bunch of

new tract homes and a bunch of half-full shopping malls all competing with each other for money from local residents whose paychecks are going almost entirely to the mortgage, gas, and kids, just like we've got in the area now. And as gas prices start creeping inevitably up again, housing prices may well decrease as people find out that it's too expensive to commute, there's no way to get a bus in near their homes, and there's not many local jobs that pay enough to cover the bills. And more local businesses will close without replacement, as they did in the recession. Hopefully I'm wrong.

If this is something you want to act on, I strongly recommend attending the meetings of your local planning board. The Los Peñasquitos Planning Board meets on the first Wednesday of every month at 6:30 p.m., and you can get the location and agenda online.

Then there's the drought. I've written before about demand hardening, and if the drought continues another few years, we'll get to see it personally. The idea behind demand hardening is that when you conserve water, you start by fixing the easy stuff, repairing pipes, ripping out lawns, draining swimming pools, and so forth. But as you keep cutting water, the cuts get harder and harder, until you get to basic demand for water for health and sanitation. That's hard to cut, because if you do, you get a public revolt (as apparently happened in Syria). This process gets speeded up by politicians who insist on growing the population and increasing water conservation simultaneously, causing less water for more users, so the demand hardens that much faster.

While the New York Times pointed out this problem in an April 5th article, our local reporters and politicians can't bring themselves to talk about it. Even KPBS talks about growth and the drought in separate segments. Different reporters, different constituencies, no connection between stories. Maybe someday.

About the City's Urban Forest Plan... Long-time CNPS-SD member Anne Fege wrote or helped write the plan, and I've got to agree with her: trees are wonderful. I love trees. If life were different, I'd move north so I could enjoy them more. Unfortunately, given the drought, I'm really not sure it's the right time to tell the City to plant and water more trees, and I wrote a comment letter to that effect. We'll see what the revised version of the plan looks like. I want to stress that for me this is about ideas, not people or personalities. Right now, I personally don't think any landscaping should be required to get extra water, and that includes natives. Feel free to disagree.

As for the Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan, City Planning released a "Preliminary Draft VPHCP" last

month. There's no category for "Preliminary Draft" in CEQA, so we're all wondering how this is going to work, but it was nice of them to give us a chance to tear it apart before we tore it apart in the official CEQA process. CNPS-SD actually signed two letters. One was from a coalition that included Preserve Wild Santee, the Chaparral Conservancy, and the Center for Biological Diversity. That letter dissected the language of the VPHCP and pointed out 20 pages of shortcomings.

In a separate letter, I went after some serious problems in their vernal pool maps and mapping process. Long story short, City planning is trying again to leave out anything that might be problematic in their environmental documents. On Del Mar Mesa, they left about 28 "road pools" off their map. These are over 40% of the vernal pools (by their definition) that had water in them this last winter. That's unacceptable, and worse, they didn't need to do it. I hope that the City does better in the next round, rather than doing what they did with the Del Mar Mesa Natural Resource Management Plan (DMM NRMP).

Speaking of which, when the City wrote the first draft of the DMM NRMP trails plan (the DMM NRMP/TP), they avoided mentioning that they had some vernal pools in the middle of the main trail. These pools are officially marked in the VPHCP this time, with endangered plants and everything. I pointed this out to them, as did USFWS. The City said they'd fix it, and so the revised version had the offending text carefully lined out. But the revision was...identical, copied and pasted. They didn't fix the problem. Remember what I said about avoiding issues?

Still, there's good news on the DMM NRMP/TP. There's now a coalition of mountain bikers and environmentalists (of whom I seem to have the biggest mouth), and we all want to get the plan finalized so that the trails can be open before the Merge 56 mall next to the Preserve is approved. None of us like all of the DMM NRMP/TP, but we're all willing to put aside our issues to get something approved, and we'll work on amending it later. That's a good thing. The DMM NRMP/TP should be in front of City Council "in a few months," and if you come out and support its passage, we can all stop using that acronym and just cheer that Del Mar Mesa will be (imperfectly) open to everyone later this year.

See, it's not all bad news.

Want to volunteer? Email conservation@cnpsd.org . Happy May!

~ **Frank Landis**, Conservation Chair

NATIVE GARDENING

Native Gardening Committee

May 13. Meets 2nd Wednesday of each month. Contact Mike Gonzales at gardening@cnpsd.org for info.

Propagation Committee

The next work group meeting will be Tuesday, May 12 at 10:00 a.m. at the City Farmer's Nursery. Contact Jim Wadman at propagation@cnpsd.org for information.

Old Town Native Plant Landscape

Saturday, May 9: Work Party - 1 to 3 p.m. Crown reduction of plants in the garden. Come tend the Native Plant Landscape, where the native shrubs actually grow too much with just 2x/month water. We'll use the crown reduction pruning technique to lighten them up and leave them looking natural and full, but not droopy. I also hope to brainstorm how we can raise funds. We need to buy a more sophisticated irrigation controller, so the area where these shrubs are located can be rescheduled to get water only 1x/month. We also need to start an endowment to care for the trees. The trees will need a skilled arborist's care if they are to reach their potential.

Thanks to everyone who helped make the Landscape lovely for the Garden Native Tour on March 28-29, and special thanks to the volunteers who helped as docents that weekend: **Joyce Trinh, Diane Rixin, and Joan Braunstein.**

The Landscape is at the corner of Taylor and Congress Streets. Park in the CalTrans lot at Juan and Taylor, then walk toward the trolley/train depot and turn in at the welcome sign on the adobe wall, under the cottonwood trees. Bring pruners, saws, gloves, sun protection and water. Restrooms are nearby.

~ Kay Stewart, fieldtrips@cnpsd.org



Sambucus mexicana
(Mexican elderberry) at the Old Town Native Plant Landscape. Photo by Bobbie Stephenson during the Garden Native Tour.

Sunset Cliffs Native Plant Garden

Native plants actually went in the ground at the north end of Sunset Cliffs Natural Park over the weekend of April 11/12. Fifteen volunteers helped with site preparation on Saturday and 15 more came by on Sunday to put the plants in the ground. CNPS members were joined by neighbors and folks from the **Sunset Cliffs Park Council, San Diego River Park, City Parks Department, and Point Loma Nazarene University** students (especially good at jackhammering) to get five of the fifteen planned native plant beds in the ground. Thanks also go to **St. Peter's by the Sea Lutheran Church** for plant storage and **Sunset Cliffs Beach Villas** for allowing us to use their water.

Despite rental equipment failures, passers-by warning us about pounding the cliff into the sea, and stopping work so a couple at a near-by hotel could get married in peace and quiet, we somehow managed to make a good start on the garden. With something tangible now in place, it should be easier to recruit volunteers for future plantings in the fall.

To see the plantings, visit www.sunsetcliffsgarden.org or, better yet, go to the corner of Sunset Cliffs Boulevard and Adair Street and see for yourself!

~ Dave Flietner

INVASIVE SPECIES

Stinknet

(*Oncosiphon piluliferum*; formerly *Matricaria globifera*)

- Native to South Africa.
- Annual herb in the Asteraceae.
- Looks similar to pineapple weed (*Matricaria discoidea*) but stinknet is taller, has brighter green foliage, and brighter yellow, more blunt tipped flowers.
- Very aromatic.

Stinknet, also commonly called globe chamomile, is an urban weed that often grows along roadsides and other disturbed areas, and it has been seen in San Diego County. It can also occur in upland areas, such as grassland and between shrubs. It can be very invasive, potentially displacing other invasive exotic species and may become a near monoculture in some places. Stinknet is often found along road shoulders first before spreading into wildlands – it is likely spread by road maintenance equipment or other vehicles. Individual plants can leapfrog out some distance away from

established infestations. Stinknet has escaped cultivation and is crowding out native species and spreading very rapidly. It is on Cal-IPC's Watch List of plants that are not yet listed on Cal-IPC's Inventory but have been reported spreading in California wildlands. Please add locations of stinknet to Calflora and send information to Elizabeth Brusati, edbrusati@cal-ipc.org.

The Botany Society is a volunteer group affiliated with both the State Park and the A-B Foundation. The focus is, of course, on the flora of the Park and the lower Colorado Desert generally. Meetings and presentations are suspended for the season while members visit cooler climes; they will begin again in November.

San Diego Natural History Museum

Museum Canyoneer hikes continue through June 2015. Explore the diverse biomes and landscapes of San Diego County with the Museum Canyoneers. To view a new interactive map of their hiking season visit <http://www.sdnhm.org/education/naturalists-of-all-ages/canyoneer-hikes/>. These are interpretive nature walks, not endurance hikes. Canyoneers try to accommodate the desires and abilities of all participants.



Pineapple weed (*Matricaria discoidea*). CalFlora photograph © 2008 Steve Matson.



Stinknet or globe chamomile (*Oncosiphon piluliferum*). CalFlora photograph © 2003 Dean Wm. Taylor.



Known locations in Southern California from CalFlora, 2015. Berkeley, California: The Calflora Database [a non-profit organization]. <http://www.calflora.org/>

Hand pulling can probably control small infestations – otherwise, applications of non-specific herbicides (i.e., glyphosate) may control it. (All info is from the March 2015 SD Management and Monitoring Program meeting or gleaned from the internet).

~ **Bobbie Stephenson**, Newsletter Editor

RELATED ACTIVITIES

Point Loma Native Plant Garden

May 2 & 17, 9 – noon. Work Party. Usually the first Saturday and third Sunday of each month. Contact: Richard@sandiegoriver.org for more info.

A-B Desert State Park Botany Society

The Anza-Borrego Desert State Park Botany Society is a small but growing organization that has been around for a few years. It now has an official web site at <http://botanysoc.squarespace.com/>. It is still somewhat in the development stages but it will get more complete over time. Send a note Don Rideout at rideouts@cox.net if you want to get on the email notification list for the Society, or you can just check the web site periodically.

24th Annual Cal-IPC Symposium
San Diego Convention Center
October 28-31, 2015
plus a special conference on:
Habitat Conservation Planning
October 29, 2015
<http://www.cal-ipc.org/symposia/index.php>

The CNPS-SD Newsletter is generally published 12 times a year. The newsletter is not peer reviewed and any opinions expressed are those of the author identified at the end of each notice or article. The newsletter editor may edit the submittal to improve accuracy, improve readability, shorten articles to fit the space, and reduce the potential for legal challenges against CNPS. If an article, as edited, is not satisfactory to the author, the author can appeal to the board. The author has the final say on whether the article, as edited, is printed in the newsletter. Submissions are due by the 10th of the month preceding the newsletter; that is, May 10 for the June newsletter, etc. Please send submittals to newsletter@cnpsd.org.



Mexican palo verde (*Parkinsonia aculeata*). Photo by Bobbie Stephenson during the Garden Native Tour.

CNPS-SD Activities Calendar
May 2015

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- 5/5: Conservation Committee Mtg, p.4
- 5/6: **Board Meeting**, p.2
- 5/9: Old Town Native Landscape Work Party, p.6
- 5/12: Propagation Committee Work Party, p.6
- 5/13: Gardening Committee Mtg, p. 6
- 5/19: **Chapter Meeting**, p. 1

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

___ Student or Limited Income \$25; ___ Individual \$45; ___ Family \$75
___ Plant Lover \$100; ___ Patron \$300; ___ Benefactor \$600; ___ Mariposa Lily \$1,500

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

Mail check payable to "CNPS" and send to: CNPS, 2707 K Street, Ste 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5113.

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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May 2015 Newsletter

Dedicated to the preservation of the California native flora

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY – SAN DIEGO

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