



Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

Volume 29, Issue 8

October 1999 Newsletter

A Non-Profit Organization
Incorporated August 31, 1971

SSMPA Garage Sale - Nov. 6th

The Santa Susana Mountain Park Association will hold a garage sale on Saturday, November 6, 1999. The sale should be a lot of fun, as well as it will help pay for our commitment of \$500 for the Interim Management Plan of our Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. Indeed, the SSMPA has already sent \$500 to the State Parks so that Dan Preece's efforts can begin. Any proceeds above \$500 will be designated to our State Park.

The garage sale will be held on the semi-circular driveway of Dalia and Dorian Keyser on busy Corbin Avenue in Tarzana, scene of previous successful garage sales. We will need the following donations of sale items and time:

1. Donations of tools, small appliances, books, phonograph records, audio and video tapes and discs, kitchen utensils, silverware, dishes, cups, glasses, flower vases, typewriters, computers, jewelry, clothing, shoes, bedding, lamps, furniture, etc.
2. Volunteers (individuals and groups) to obtain donations from others.
3. Volunteers to pick up donations when necessary.
4. Volunteers to price items for sale - Friday, November 5th, late afternoon and early evening.
5. Sign making, finish by Friday, November 5th.
6. Sign posting on Saturday by 7:30 a.m. and sign take down at 3:30 p.m.
7. Complete pricing and put sale items out on Saturday 6:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.
8. Saturday selling — 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Please call Dorian or Dalia Keyser at (818) 345-3795 to volunteer or for additional information about the sale. Their address is 5922 Corbin Ave., Tarzana, CA. ☼

AB 18 ⇒ Prop. 12

The Vallaraigosa-Keeley Bond Act, Assembly Bill 18, passed by the legislature and signed by Gov. Davis, has been transformed into Proposition 12 and placed on the Tuesday, March 7, 2000 ballot. This park and wildlife bond act received nearly unanimous bipartisan support, reflecting California residents' wish to provide parks and recreation for its growing community, as well as their comprehension that wildlife require open space and protected habitat.

Proposition 12 emphasizes urban areas, providing funds to urban conservation corps and recreation for at-risk youth. It also promises protection of open space from fast-growing suburbs and of remaining wilderness areas. See the www.safeparks.org Web site for the funding breakdown.

For further information, or to volunteer for the Proposition 12 campaign, email rdinno@pcl.org, write Safe Neighborhood Parks at 926 J Street, #612, Sacramento, CA 95814, or call Rachel Dinno at 916-313-4512.

Program for October 18th General Membership Meeting

Art Langton of the Valley Audubon Society will present a slide show on the Birds of the Chatsworth Nature Preserve. Art has been guiding birding tours of the Nature Preserve for many years and is an entertaining and knowledgeable person.

Later this month, Art will be leading another car caravan birding trip into Chatsworth Reservoir/Nature Preserve. For more information, see the hikes/activities page.

The General Membership Meeting will take place at 7:30 p.m., on Monday, October 18, 1999, at the Rockpointe Recreation Center, 22300 Devonshire, Chatsworth (so. side of street), one block before entry to Chatsworth Park South. ☼

2 STILL TIME TO STOP THE SUNSHINE CANYON LANDFILL EXPANSION

The Sunshine Canyon landfill expansion would eliminate 500 more acres of open space at the east end of our Santa Susana Mountains, adjacent to O'Melveny Park. Not only would the expanded landfill be visible from hiking trails in O'Melveny Park, but also the location of the planned expansion is directly above a major drinking water aquifer for the San Fernando Valley, as well as close to the Van Gogh Elementary School.

With 5 years left on the existing landfill, expansion of the landfill now is unnecessary, not to mention harmful to wildlife, and water and air quality. The existing landfill already takes up 240 acres of this important wildlife linkage. Plants such as the Slender Mariposa Lily and Black Walnut, as well as raptor nests, are threatened by this project.

Alternatives and mitigations should be required. One alternative is to expand recycling programs. In Germany and Japan, over 80% of trash was recycled by the late '80s. One of the methods for accomplishing this in Germany was locating large, color-coded bins on residential street corners, permitting recyclables to be separated out before disposal. In Los Angeles, home owners can easily recycle, but the same cannot be said for apartment dwellers.

Mitigations recommended by Councilmember Mike Feuer were for air conditioning units to be provided for each Van Gogh Elementary School classroom, and for a pollution control monitor to be installed at the school at BFI's expense. Note that BFI protested these conditions.

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Santa Susana Pass State Park Planning

By Judy Garriss

At our last General Meeting, Dan Preece explained the interim and long-term planning process for the recently acquired Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. If you enjoy this park, you may want to give input on the planning process. For example, are you an equestrian and prefer certain trails? Bike rider or hiker? Do you have any problems with the trails? Do you want our Sunday Stage Coach Trail "Hikes into History" to continue? Are the trails adequate and what do you enjoy about them?

Watch for media invitations to these public input sessions or send suggestions to us and we will present them to Dan Preece. ☼

CHATSWORTH NATURE PRESERVE - A PLAN

By Chris Van Schaack

Even though it is not billed as a public *hearing*, members of the public may attend the DWP Commissioners meeting on October 19th. Granting long-term protection, possibly through a conservation easement, to the Chatsworth Nature Preserve / Reservoir will be discussed. The meeting will take place at 10:00 a.m. at DWP headquarters, 111 N. Hope St., Los Angeles. Call Councilperson Hal Bernson's office (213-485-3343) for more information.

It is exciting that the City of Los Angeles has reached this point regarding the future of the Chatsworth Nature Preserve / Reservoir. The City Council, under Councilperson Bernson's initiative, has placed zoning restrictions on the land and given the area a special "Nature Preserve" designation in the City's General Plan.

An even more formalized protective status for the area must be awarded to ensure more permanence. As suggested in the DWP's "Concept Study," this can be accomplished by granting an easement. This should be completed in conjunction with the establishment of a long term conservation / education management agreement. To choose partners whose hands will be tied or whose conservation efforts could be destroyed in the future is an unwise use of energy. If protection is not granted in perpetuity, this will only offset DWP property maintenance expenses until such a time as the City deems this open space useful for purposes other than a nature preserve.

The following are candidates to manage the site in cooperation with the DWP:

- California Science Center
- L.A. City Recreation and Parks Dept.
- Los Angeles Zoo
- Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
- Resource Conservation Dist. of the Santa Monica Mtns.

The focus of the Concept Study gives some idea of the department's "reuse" options for the preserve. Six of the seven scenarios discussed how to develop the land with both residential and commercial building. The study did not discuss options on how to create and fund a nature preserve without first damaging or destroying it. To advance to the management selection phase without awarding the area more permanent protection is only to stave off the battle until another time.

The partnership selection process should not be a contest with winners and losers but a group effort. Organizations

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CHATSWORTH NATURE PRESERVE - A PLAN

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should come to the table with their ideas and concerns, discuss the options, and come to mutual agreement. To not include the many interested parties in the Preserve development process would only serve to limit resources. Including more groups in the development process will involve some time and effort but, in the long run, the relationships developed and the knowledge gained are certain to prove the effort worthwhile.

I would recommend that an Advisory Council be formed. This council would include those parties interested in addressing the numerous issues faced in developing this area as a nature preserve. The council's agenda should be to thoroughly evaluate the issues surrounding Conservation Maintenance (to maintain and enhance habitat, to improve wildlife corridors), Educational Opportunities, Access Supervision, and potential funding sources. It could also be beneficial to form a technical subcommittee which would include a wide range of interested parties.

Chatsworth Nature Preserve directors should be of a non-political orientation. They must have a track record which shows they can work with many parties and can be held accountable by making information, such as financial records and future plans, easily accessible to the public. The director must develop working relationships with those living adjacent to the area and foster the connection between these residents and the Preserve. This might be accomplished through a community involvement program (both local and regional).

Also, the entity chosen to direct the Nature Preserve must have the legal authority to restrict access. The managing entity should be given a long term (55-year minimum) lease. As the newly designated Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park lies directly to the north of DWP property, it would be beneficial to include State Parks in the development phase of the Chatsworth Nature Preserve. The DWP must also be an active partner, at least in the preliminary development phase; DWP staff have valuable knowledge of the area which has a rather complex infrastructure.

The organization managing the preserve should actively seek to maintain existing wildlife corridors, and to improve upon them utilizing easements and/or land acquisitions.

Presently, two land development groups are requesting planning changes and entitlements (zoning changes, general plan amendments, annexation of County land within an Significant Ecological Area, etc.) on property adjacent to the Preserve (at Valley Circle and Roscoe as well as above Chatsworth Oaks Park). Preserve directors must be able to take an active role in shaping such development so as to maintain and enhance wildlife corridor status.

Clarification of the Chatsworth Nature Preserve / Reservoir's status would be helpful. The L.A. Planning Department claims the area was not awarded protective status and zoning, and planning designations could be changed at any time, making the title of 'Chatsworth Nature Preserve' basically window dressing! The Dayton Canyon Estates project did not even consider the development's impact on the Nature Preserve.

DWP management has said that to comply with State water agency regulations all existing infrastructure must be maintained. According to them, this entails ongoing riparian habitat removal as well as other work which hinders wildlife. To create a functional Preserve, the area must be removed from a status which requires such encroachments.

Removal of the concrete storm water channels, beginning at the entrance to the Ecology Pond, would be of great benefit. This riparian strip acts as a filter for urban runoff. The L.A./ San Gabriel Watershed Council may be of help with this. Ponding should be allowed to take place in low areas within the reservoir structure, at the southwest detention basin, as well as other potential wetland areas.

In the past, DWP eliminated all standing water; only more recently (following Art Langton's suggestions) have wetland areas been allowed to form. Other suggestions are to: increase the native vegetation buffer zone around the Ecology Pond, and maintain an adequate depth; develop a water quality monitoring program for the Ecology Pond, as well as for streams that intermittently flow into the Preserve; develop a program to improve water quality adjacent to homes with high ground water/septic problems at the north end of the Nature Preserve (Chatsworth Lake Manor).

The Nature Preserve's development process could provide an opportunity for hands-on environmental training for City employees (such as DWP, Public Works, etc.). The Preserve could be used to research and showcase habitat improvement projects which would be applicable to other locations within the City. Examples include the removal of concrete water channels in conjunction with riparian restoration which provides natural storm water filtration (as well as many other benefits), projects working with adjacent home owners to replace flammable home components (wood shingle roofs and fences) or to increase wildlife habitat by landscaping with locally native plants, etc.

Research could be initiated at the Preserve on the impact and control efforts relating to invasive exotic plants. Examples of these plants include Fountain Grass, Castor Bean, Pampas Grass, Tamarisk, and a newly arrived thistle. This thistle

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(possibly from Africa) is spreading at the south rim of the Preserve near the Fallbrook entrance. It has spread rapidly in Northern California and efforts need to be focused to remove it before its population expands. A monitor and control program could be developed with precautions that ensure exotic plants are not brought into the area from equipment or vehicles.

Under the direction of the L.A. City Fire Dept. as well as DWP management, more progressive fire abatement techniques that balance fire liability with preservation efforts could be implemented. A management plan specifying individuals capable of implementing and customizing its application to this unique area is necessary.

It is important to include local property owners in the planning process to ensure property owners' concerns are met. Property owners can find out the beneficial role they can play by ensuring their homes and landscapes are designed to minimally impact wildlife.

Chris Van Schaack lives in Chatsworth Lake and operates the Tarweed Native Plant Nursery. He can be reached at (818) 888-2318. ☼



STOP SUNSHINE CANYON LANDFILL EXPANSION

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The issue of expanding the Sunshine Canyon landfill returns to the L.A. City Council for the final vote on October 26, 1999. We still have time to write, fax, email and call the City Council about this matter. Write to:

Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Main Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012-4801

To reach any member of the L.A. City Council, use the City Council's *toll-free* number for San Fernando Valley residents: (818) 756-8121, then enter the respective 7 digits of the City Council member's phone number — see the list below.

To determine your City Council District, go to this Web site:

<http://citycouncil.cityofLA.org/index.htm>

Councilperson	District	Phone	E-mail Address
Mike Hernandez	1st	(213) 485-3451	hernandez@c01.ci.la.ca.us
Joel Wachs	2nd	(213) 485-3391	wachs@c02.ci.la.ca.us
Laura Chick	3rd	(213) 485-3486	lchick@c03.ci.la.ca.us
John Ferraro	4th	(213) 485-3337	ferraro@c04.ci.la.ca.us
Mike Feuer	5th	(213) 485-5013	council5@c05.ci.la.ca.us
Ruth Galanter	6th	(213) 485-3357	galanter@c06.ci.la.ca.us
Alex Padilla	7th	(818) 756-9115	eklement@c07.ci.la.ca.us
Mark Ridley-Thomas	8th	(213) 485-3331	mjones@c08.ci.la.ca.us
Rita Walters	9th	(213) 485-3351	council9@c09.ci.la.ca.us
Nate Holden	10th	(213) 485-3323	holden@c10.ci.la.ca.us
Cindy Miscikowski	11th	(213) 485-3811	miscikow@c11.ci.la.ca.us
Hal Bernson	12th	(213) 485-3343	bernson@c12.ci.la.ca.us
Jackie Goldberg	13th	(213) 485-3353	goldberg@c13.ci.la.ca.us
Nick Pacheco	14th	(213) 485-3335	arubalcava@c14.ci.la.ca.us
Rudy Svorinich	15th	(213) 485-3347	svorinich@c15.ci.la.ca.us

For more information, contact Mary Edwards of the North Valley Coalition, 11862 Balboa Bl., #172, Granada Hills, CA 91344, or call Mary at (800) 713-1642, send email to no2bfi@aol.com, or visit the North Valley Coalition's Web site at www.nodump.com. ☼

INTERIM MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR SANTA SUSANA PASS STATE HISTORIC PARK

By Dorian Keyser

The March 7, 2000 State primary election will include Proposition 12, the \$2.1 billion "Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Act of 2000" bond act put on the ballot as a result of approval of State Assembly Bill 18. If approved by those voting, Proposition 12 will, among other things, provide \$465,000,000 for land acquisitions, repairs, and implementation of infrastructure of State parks.

Although the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park will be eligible for funds *for land acquisition* from this proposition, it will not be eligible for funds *for planning and implementation of infrastructure* in the park unless an Interim Management Plan becomes available before the funds are obligated.

Despite our requests to State Parks management in Sacramento to budget money for this task, they have not done so. Accordingly, the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association and the Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains have each agreed to supply \$500 to fund retired Angeles District Superintendent Dan Preece to generate the Interim Management Plan and coordinate the review of the plan by the public. ☼

Stagecoach Trail and Exploration Series hikes are offered by the Santa Susana Mountain Task Force (SSMTF) of the Sierra Club and publicized by the SSMPA and the Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains (FPSSM).

Birding in Chatsworth Reservoir

Saturday, October 30, 1999. Art Langton of the Valley Audubon Society leads a trip into the Chatsworth Nature Preserve. Meet at 8:00 a.m. sharp at the north end of Fallbrook, north of Roscoe. Bring a snack, beverage, and a scope or binoculars. Be prepared for the tour to last until 12:30 p.m. No smoking or pets allowed; facilities are limited and primitive. This is primarily a birding trip, but it will also be an opportunity to see the reservoir and the wide variety of life present there. For additional information, call Art Langton at (818) 881-0973, evenings. ☼

Bird Walks at Sepulveda Basin

Second Saturdays, October thru March. The SF Valley Audubon Society leads free bird walks for beginners and families in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area on the second Saturday of each month. These leisurely bird walks start at 8:30 a.m. and last until 11:00 a.m. Wear sturdy shoes, layered clothing, and a cap or hat with a brim. Binoculars, scopes and bird guides will be available for use by participants. From the 405, go west on Burbank, turn north on Woodley. After 1/2 mile, turn east on the 2nd possible right turn, on the Park road. Take the right fork in the road for about 1/2 mile to the Wildlife Area parking. Meet at the amphitheater. For additional information, call Muriel Kotin at (818) 783-4293, or Linda Jones at (818) 831-6061. ☼

HIKES

Devil Canyon/Halloween Potluck

Sunday, October 24, 1999. Easy 5-mile, 200-foot gain hike through a devil of a canyon where demonic Santa Ana winds howl and carve skeletal designs on sandstone walls. Learn witch plant is native and witch is not. Expect some stream hopping. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at north end of Topanga Canyon Blvd. Exit off 118 Freeway, turn right and park in dirt lot on Mojave Trail or turn left and park on Poema Point. Wear lugsoles; bring water, utensils, cup, plate, and potluck item for 6. Leaders are Judy Garris (818-346-7654) and Rosemarie White (818-769-1521). ☼

Wilson Canyon

Thursday, October 28, 1999. A moderately paced, 6-8 mile, limited gain, hike in Wilson Canyon, the newly acquired Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Park with a magnificent oak area and views of the San Fernando Valley. Optional steep ridge use trail for conditioned hikers. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the trailhead at the end of the Park road which begins 100 yards east of Olive View Hospital on Olive View Drive, Sylmar. Exit 405 or 210 Freeway at Roxford. Call leader for rideshare. Wear lugsoles, sunscreen, hat; bring water and lunch. Leaders are Ramona Dunn (818-783-8318) and Art Rich (818-340-5955). ☼



SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAIN PARK ASSOCIATION

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN / RENEW / REJOIN S.S.M.P.A. (Please circle one.)

Investing in the future of our communities and its resources is probably one of the best expenditures of our time and efforts. Return this cutoff with your contributions to help ensure our futures. Please make checks payable to SSMPA and send to SSMPA, P.O. Box 4831, Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831.



- Senior or Student (\$5.00)
 Individual (\$10.00)
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Come join our mailing parties! Food, fun and camaraderie!
Perform a useful service! Call Mary at 887-1345 to find out more!

If the expiration date on your label is marked in pink, your dues have expired.

Please send in your dues if you wish to continue your SSMPA membership
and continue to receive our newsletter. If you already paid, please disregard this notice.

If the expiration date on the label is marked in blue, payment of your membership dues is due this month.

If the expiration date is marked in green, payment of your dues will be due next month.

Many thanks to Randy Perras, Manager of the Topanga
Canyon/Roscoe Office Depot, for the donation of print-
ing services, i.e., the duplication of our newsletter. We
very much appreciate it!

Santa Susana Mountain Park Association
P.O. Box 4831
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