



Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

November 1996

Sage Ranch = Ecological Camping?

by Dorian Keyser

November's General Meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, November 18, 1996 at Glendale Federal Bank, Community Room, 21821 Devonshire Street, Chatsworth, one block east of Topanga Canyon Blvd. The business meeting will conclude after 30 minutes. At 7:30 p.m., Michael D. Freeman, a representative of the Maho Company, will present a slide show and discuss the Maho proposal to develop 120 "ecological campsites" at Sage Ranch and to operate a program which will bring people from throughout the world to participate in ecological and educational opportunities at the resultant "improved" facility. The Sage Ranch is a 605 acre abandoned citrus ranch with a large house in the Simi Hills of Ventura County which was purchased by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) in 1990 upon the urging of Janice Hinkston. In 1993, the Conservancy built and opened ten public camp sites there. However the facility is now closed to all but group camping due to the lack of funds. Recently, a private firm call Maho, which has highly acclaimed private ecological camping in U.S. National Parks in the Virgin Islands, submitted a proposal to develop 20 campsites at the Sage Ranch with tent cabins and other facilities for "ecological camping" and other educational programs on a year-long basis. Maho anticipates attracting people from throughout the world and the Conservancy would realize about \$225,000 annually for use in other Conservancy properties, such as "Happy Camp" in Ventura County.

Please, come to hear this proposal so that we can together formulate a response. Is this proposal good or bad for our future?

General Meeting Notice

The Association will have no general membership meeting for the month of December. Please attend the next monthly meeting on January 20, 1997. Other meetings for the first half of 1997 will be: February 17, 1997, March 17, 1997, April 21, 1997, and May 19, 1997.

Park Bonds Passes!

Proposition A, Los Angeles County Parks, Beaches, and Recreation Act of 1996, was approved by L.A. County voters on November 5, 1996. The proposition, which was placed on the ballot by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, provides \$4.1 million to expand Stoney Point Park in Chatsworth to the edge of SR118; \$5 million for the acquisition of the Santa Clarita Woodlands; and competitive access to a portion of the \$14 million dedicated for trails, tree-planting, etc. We also will compete for additional funds for acquisitions in our area from the Santa Monica Mountain Conservancy. As this proposition offered so much to so many at such little cost, many people invested their energies and time in ensuring that it passed. Congratulations to all of us for investing in our future.

Los Angeles County Cultural Historical Monuments

by Virginia Watson, Chatsworth Historical Society

The Hill/Palmer Homestead Cottage was named Los Angeles Cultural Historical Monument No. 133 in 1974 at the request of the Chatsworth Historical Society and named to the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. Located within Chatsworth Park South, it belongs to the Los Angeles City Department of Recreation and Parks with the Chatsworth Historical Society as Conservators. All that is left of what was once a 230-acre ranch, it is the only remaining homestead cottage with surrounding gardens and fruit trees left in the San Fernando Valley. The second house to be built on the land, the present cottage was constructed circa 1911. Tours are given the first Sunday of every month from 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

The 1903 Pioneer Church, relocated in the northwest corner of Oakwood Memorial Park, 22601 Lassen Street, Chatsworth, was named Los Angeles Cultural Historical Monument No. 14, in 1963, the first Los Angeles City monument to be moved. Formerly located at 10051 Topanga Canyon Blvd., it was moved to the cemetery by the Chatsworth Historical Society in 1965. Currently rented, church services are held on Sundays and tours are given on the first Sunday of every month from 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

Hike Leaders by Barbara Coffman & Ted Dent

Every Sunday (except July-Sept. and fifth Sundays of the month) hike leaders take groups of approximately ten to thirty interested individuals, families, and groups on hikes on the Statecoach Trail. The need for additional hike leaders to be trained is always there. If you would like to become one of the few, the proud, the hike leader, please call Barbara Coffman at 818-347-5603. We're non-violent.

Did You Know That.....? by Albert Knight

Beginning during the late 1830's (during California's Mexican Era) and continuing into the mid-1860's (during the post-Civil War American Era), independent California Indians from the San Joaquin Valley and from the southern Sierra Nevada Mountains frequently raided into the "civilized" coastal zone, including into the San Fernando and Santa Clara River Valleys? These "Horsethief Indians" as they were often known, formed an effective irregular light cavalry and would suddenly appear at the ranchos and even sometimes at the pueblos themselves. Large numbers of horses would swiftly be moved into the foothills and later into the mountainous interior, usually never to be seen again. From Sonoma in the north to San Diego in the south, independent California Indian peoples (who had been joined by coastal peoples who had fled the Mission controlled coast) almost never killed people (unless there was a counter-attack by the owners of the horses) or damaged the settlements. The natives wanted the (horse)meat and something to sell or trade for a profit in the interior (e.g. the highly mobile horses). The Mexican government initiated a plan to build and garrison a series of forts in the passes of the Coast Ranges, but the Yankees seized California before any of the forts were built. During this little known period in California's history, California Indians demonstrated that they were as good as light cavalry as were (are) the better known Apache, Sioux, Cheyenne, or any other of the mounted Native American peoples. Only with the establishment of Fort Tejon and the near-by Tejon Indian Reservation (the first Indian reservation in California in 1854) did Indian raiding into Southern California begin to diminish, finally ending after the return of Federal forces to California following the end of the American Civil War.

Santa Susana Docents by Janet Lazik

The Santa Susana Docents provide Nature/History walks for elementary school classes at Chatsworth Park South. On the walk, the children tour five stations, including a small display of local artifacts at the Visitors Center. This program has been very well received by hundreds of children, and hundreds more children could learn about the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills if ... if... we had a couple of more docents. If you have a need to help others, have a couple of hours free on a regular basis, and want some really good times, this may be your great opportunity knocking. For more information on becoming a docent and joining the fun, sharing your love of nature with children, please call Pat at 818-998-5224 or Jan at 818-993-0508.

Stagecoach Trail Hikes by Barbara Coffman

SSMPA hikes are conducted every Sunday, October - June (except fifth Sundays of the month) from the parking lot of Chatsworth Park South Recreation Building, which is located at the western terminus of Devonshire Street, about one mile west of Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Hikers meet at 9:00 a.m. with the hike leader for the 4 mile (700 ft. gain) loop up the Stagecoach Trail, which is in the hills west of the park. Hikers are advised to bring water and a snack in hiker's back pack or hip pack. Lug sole shoes or sturdy, closed shoes are advised as is the wearing of a hat. All hike leaders are knowledgeable and experience. Barbara Coffman is the hike leader for the first Sundays of the month; Judy Garris on the second Sundays; Lindsay Wilhelm on the third Sundays; and Lee Baum on the fourth Sundays.

Other Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills Hikes

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority offer hikes on an irregular basis at Rocky Peak Park (SR118 at Chatsworth/Simi Valley border); Sage Ranch (Chatsworth, Valley Circle to Woolsey Canyon Road to Black Canyon Road); Santa Clarita Woodlands/Mentryville (I-5, Lyons, west to Pico Canyon, left at Y to end of road), and Towsley Canyon Park (I-5, Calgrove, west on The Old Road to Ed Davis Park, 1/2 mile to parking area by kiosk). There will be a hike at Rocky Peak Park on Saturday, November 16, 1996 from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.; at Sage Ranch on Saturday, November 23 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., on Sunday December 8 from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m., and on Saturday, December 14 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; and at Santa Clarita Woodlands on Sunday November 17 from noon to 4:00 p.m. These hikes are free. Please call Nancy at 310-589-3200, extension 126 for additional information and requirements.

Thank You by the Editor

A Special Thank You is given to all who have renewed/maintained their membership or who have joined recently, including: Carol Hiestand (LIFE membership!) and John Witkowski. SSMPA exists because of its caring/contributing members. Second, we would like to thank Virginia Watson from the Chatsworth Historical Society for speaking at our October meeting on the history of Chatsworth and the Simi Hills/Santa Susana Mountains and for providing the article on Los Angeles Cultural Historical Monuments in Chatsworth for this newsletter. Thank you Virginia. Third, thanks to the San Fernando Valley Historical Society for including in their newsletter/journal articles on hikes given by SSMPA and SMMC. Fourth, thanks to Richard Kahlenberg and Nancy Razanski; Nancy provided Devil's Slide information to Mr. Kahlenberg for the article "Valley Sites Are Links to the Latino Heritage" which was published in the Los Angeles Times on November 7, 1996. Finally, thanks to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Executive Director Joseph T. Edmiston, the conservancy's rangers, and civilian maintenance workers for going beyond the call of duty in skillfully preventing flames from devouring the agency's historic compound in Solstice Canyon during the recent Calabasas to Malibu wildfires. (Oh, if we could bottle all these pro-human mind-sets!)

Visitors Center Docents by Susan Gerke

Have you always wanted to tell people where to go? Have you never wanted to tell someone to come look at your rattlesnake? Every Sunday, people visit the SSMPA Visitors Center, located in Chatsworth Park South, open from 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m., asking questions about the area, its history, the geology, archaeological sites, location of Devil's Slide, location of the rest rooms, etc. As a citizen/volunteer, you can become a Visitor Center docent and become fulfilled and have a great time doing it. Please call right now, or as soon as you can, 818-340-4011, and tell Susan that you know you are the right person (trained or trainable), you have three hours a month to give to others, and begin a great relationship.

Phone List

Assemblywoman Paula Boland -----	818-368-3838
California State Parks Department (general information) -----	818-880-0350
California State Parks Foundation -----	415-258-9975
Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (San Fernando Valley) ----	818-885-1032
Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (San Clarita) -----	805-254-2111
* Frank M. Buda, Attorney At Law -----	818-999-9871 *
Friends of California Parks (Laura Svendsgaard) -----	800-300-7501
Governor Pete Wilson -----	213-897-0322
Los Angeles City Park Headquarters (general information) -----	213-665-5188
Los Angeles City Park Headquarters (Ranger dispatch) -----	213-913-4147
Southern California Edison (general information) -----	800-655-4555
State Senator Cathie Wright -----	800-458-8500
William S. Abbey, Deputy Attorney General, State of California -----	213-897-2604



SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAIN PARK ASSOCIATION **WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN/RENEW/REJOIN S.S.M.P.A.**

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

___ Senior or Student (\$5.00) ___ Individual (\$10.00) ___ Family (\$15.00)

___ Business or Organization (\$25.00) ___ Life Member (\$100.00)

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

SPECIAL INTEREST/EXPERTISE: _____

*Notes of separate Helicopters
for W.A. Woman Club
Barbara*

CALENDAR

- Nov. 17** (Sunday) Weekly Hike; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.
- Nov. 18** (Monday) General Membership Meeting (see article on page one)
- Nov. 24** (Sunday) Weekly Hike; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.
- Dec. 1** (Sunday) Weekly Hike; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.
- Dec. 2** (Monday) Exec. Board Meeting - Vis.Ctr., Chats.Park.S. 7:00 p.m.
- Dec. 8** (Sunday) Weekly Hike; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.
- Dec. 15** (Sunday) Weekly Hike; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.
- Dec. 22** (Sunday) Weekly Hike; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.
- Jan. 5** (Sunday) Weekly Hike; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.
- Jan. 6** (Monday) Exec. Board Meeting - Vis.Ctr., Chats.Park S. 7:00 p.m.
- Jan. 12** (Sunday) Weekly Hike; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.
- Jan. 19** (Sunday) Weekly Hike; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.
- Jan. 20** (Monday) General Membership Meeting

SSMPA Executive Board

Doreen Rusen, President (818-360-0894); Albert Knight, Vice President (818-252-3466); Theodore Dent, Secretary (818-882-4664); James Riley, Treasurer (805-526-0857); Janice Hinkston, Founder (818-884-9610); Member-at-Large: Pauline Aue (818-341-5872); Bette Butler (818-700-0220); Barbara Coffman (818-347-5603); Susan Gerke (818-704-9304); Lindsay Wilhelm (818-348-9682)

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Foundation for the Preservation
of the Santa Susana Mountains
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