

# *Santa Susana Mountain Park Association*

Volume 30, Issue 16

A Non-Profit 501(c)(4) Organization  
Incorporated August 31, 1971

## *January 2002 Newsletter*

### **What's going on with the local projects?**

#### **▼ Dayton Canyon Estates Project**

Location: Intersection of Roscoe & Valley Circle Blvds. in West Hills. Plans are being made for subdivision improvements anticipated "probably this summer," said a representative of Sun Cal Development. In conjunction with the first phase of housing, beginning sometime this year, an equestrian trail will be put through the property and along the west side of Valley Circle Blvd. The trail will cross over at Schoenborn and go north along the outside of the fence. The trail will also go west along the planned continuation of Roscoe Blvd. These improvements along the boundary of the development are "marketing as well as public utility considerations" and are to coincide with the Scenic Corridor Ordinance, which is under the jurisdiction of the City of LA.

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy purchased 280 acres in Dayton Canyon to be set aside as open space.



#### **▲ Eagles Nest Project**

This project is contained within the "Chatsworth Reservoir Santa Susana Pass State Park Connector Project Plan" area and is ranked in the top 100 projects of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy's adopted 2000 acquisition work programs. Located in the northeast corner of the Simi Hills, the area comprises one of two remaining habitat linkages that connect the Chatsworth Nature Preserve to the core habitat of the Simi Hills.

On November 21, 2001, the LA City Planning Dept. officially approved the project plan of Tentative Tract No. 50632, located at 9861 Andora Avenue for a maximum of 19 single family houses, subject to numerous conditions.

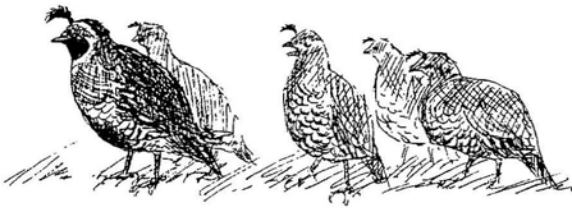
Copies of the decision were sent to individuals who signed up to receive it at the public hearing on June 14, 1999, arriving in mailboxes on November 27th, just days before the deadline given to appeal the decision. However, 39 persons and agencies came forward to submit their timely appeal--which was reportedly a record number for such appeals ever filed in LA! A public hearing before the P.L.U.M. Committee is to be scheduled. If there is enough time, notice of the hearing will appear in this newsletter.

As far as the sale of an adjoining parcel which would influence the outcome of the development, this issue is still alive (in escrow) and being worked on.



PHOTO BY J.W. PROFFIT

10/28/01: Jim Shirley explains cave formations to Dayton Canyon hikers.



► **Deerlake Ranch Project**

Location: North of 118 Fwy. between Topanga Cyn. Blvd. & Canoga Ave. On January 8th, another community meeting was held with The Presidio Group and local residents regarding this proposed high-density development of 484 single family dwellings on 235.6 acres. In addition to high density, other issues of great concern include traffic, drainage, schools and environmental damage.

A public hearing before the Regional Planning Commission will be held **Weds., January 23rd**, in the **Hall of Records, Rm. 150, 320 W. Temple St., LA at 9:00 am**. The draft EIR for Tentative Tract Map #53138 can be reviewed at the Chatsworth Public Library, 21052 Devonshire St. The statutory deadline for comment letters was January 11th. Concerned individuals are encouraged to attend the public hearing. For questions and/or assistance, call Vanessa Watters (818-341-4554) or Anna Cox (818-882-2924).

► **Ahmanson Ranch Project**

Washington Mutual's recent report claims that Malibu Creek will be cleaner once the new town of 3,050 homes is built above the waterway because so much treated waste water will be drawn from the Tapia sewage treatment plant downstream that it will actually divert a small amount of gunk from the creek. This water is needed to irrigate the projected golf courses and parks in the amount of millions of gallons daily. But environmentalists and Heal The Bay brand the plan as absurd and disingenuous.

The Calabasas City Council is expected to give the Ahmanson anti-development effort \$344,000 sometime this January, mostly to cover legal fees. Calabasas Mayor Janice Lee: "This is equivalent to saving Yosemite or Yellowstone. It's about commerce and quality of life for the whole Southern California region."

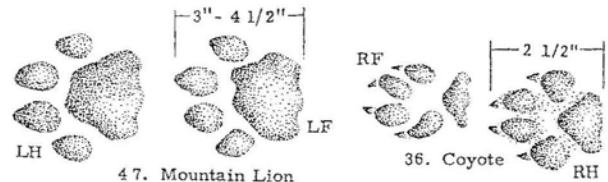
Former Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt was hired some time ago by Washington Mutual to promote the Ahmanson Ranch project. Perhaps many of our readers received "the promo letter" from Guy Gniadek, president of the Ahmanson Land Co. last November. This letter told us what a wonderful asset the Ahmanson Ranch project will be to the community and invited our views by filling out and returning a postcard. Here is one writer's opinion of this project, printed in part from the Santa Monica Mirror:

"Another Big, Bad Idea"

Once again, a big developer is planning a mega-project which will not only reduce a vast, pristine and priceless wilderness area to merely expensive real estate, but will make life considerably more difficult for thousands of

people in this area. With its plans for the Ahmanson Ranch, Washington Mutual joins the list of big-time Westside developers who are bent on exercising their property rights at the expense of the rest of us. Compounding the problem is the fact that the project is located in Ventura County, but LA County residents in the west Valley and coastal cities will suffer the consequences. Essentially, Ventura County gets the mine and LA County gets the shaft." From time to time big-time developers manage to short-circuit or evade a community or region's right to control its own destiny. This is such an instance. Surely good neighbor WaMu would not tolerate its neighbors dumping their garbage onto its premises and yet it apparently expects us to tolerate its dumping thousands of additional cars and tons of water and air pollution on us. Our right to protect and preserve our common ground, water and air, as well as our own individual properties from further degradation is far more compelling than WaMu's right to profit from such degradation. At this late hour on the wilderness clock, WaMu should do the truly neighborly thing and donate the 2,800 acres to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. If it doesn't, then Ventura County must not only require a new EIR, it must heed the calls of its residents and neighboring communities and reject this project. To do less would be to sabotage our children's and their children's future.

Readers can communicate their views to Mr. Gniadek at Ahmanson Ranch Land Co., 25343 W. Mureau Rd., Calabasas, CA 91302-9890; phone no. (818) 727-8448.



► **Chatsworth Land Preservation Assn. (CLPA) and the City of Chatsworth Need Your Help**

Regarding the NW corner of Chatsworth Street & Topanga Cyn. Blvd. issue, CLPA is now required to prepare an administrative record -- a critical stage in their lawsuit against the City of LA, the Archdiocese of LA (property owner) & Ted Stein (party of interest in escrow). This must be done from City Hall files and will require a bonded copying service as well as a certified transcriber. Their attorney will also be preparing the first brief to present to the Court. The costs over the next few months will be mounting! The community's support is needed to ensure that their case is prepared and that victory is reached. Please send whatever you can to:

CLPA  
P.O. Box 4183  
Chatsworth, CA 91313-4183

CLPA and the City of Chatsworth wants you to know your contributions are *greatly* appreciated! Go to [www.chatsworth-usa.org](http://www.chatsworth-usa.org) for more info.

## **General Membership Meeting** **Monday, January 21, 2002**

Paul Edelman, Chief of Planning and Natural Resources, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, will be here to give us a PowerPoint presentation and talk about what is left to be done to keep open space between Sage Ranch, Chatsworth Nature Preserve and the Ronald Reagan Freeway. Please join us for what should be a very interesting and informative evening.

SSMPA General Membership Program meetings take place every 3rd Monday from September through November and January through May. Program meetings begin at 7:15 p.m. and generally conclude by 9:00 p.m. at Rockpointe Clubhouse, 22300 Devonshire, Chatsworth, on the south side, 1 block before entering Chatsworth Park South.

Members are invited to General Membership Program meetings and Board of Directors meetings. Board of Directors meetings take place at the Chatsworth Park South Visitors Center on the first Monday of the month. Refreshments are served at program meetings. ▲

### **Chatsworth Nature Preserve**

DWP officials say the Preserve will remain closed to the public until they find a manager to help take over the financial costs of maintaining the property. A partner agency would have to pay caretaking salaries and additional costs that might include nature classes and educational programs. Several groups have submitted proposals but the issue is still up in the air. In the meantime, the DWP has closed the preserve as a security measure intended to protect all water sources from potential terrorist attacks.

Canada goose counts in the Preserve are down this year, due to reasons only the geese know for sure. Theories include the destruction of thousands of geese in the Seattle area, loss of foraging area at Pierce College or possibly because of the relatively mild fall this year which might have delayed migration (they may not all be here yet!)

### **Support the 2002 Park Bond Initiative**

Environmental groups from around the state are looking to the successful passage of Prop 40 on the March 2002 ballot. This proposition will provide \$1,275 billion for land conservation and improved air and water quality, and \$1,325 billion dedicated to CA's state and local parks, recreation, and historic and cultural resources. Your help is needed to pass this important bond act. For more info or to donate funds electronically, go to [www.voteyeson40.org](http://www.voteyeson40.org) or contact Bryan Blum at (916) 313-4539.



## **Updates on Some Critical Land Acquisitions Needed in the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills**

by Dorian Keyser, SSMPA VP & Lands Committee Chair

● **Joughlin Ranch.** This 1,700+ acre undeveloped property has a very high priority for acquisition by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. Its acquisition would almost complete the connection between Conservancy-owned property that abuts the eastern border of its 4,267-acre Rocky Oaks Park and its 3,500-acre Santa Clarita Woodlands Park. The Conservancy has applied for a grant from the California Wildlife Conservation Board to supplement its available funds.

● **Indian Springs.** 272.5 acres of the 338-acre Indian Springs Phase II property will be deeded to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy as a condition for LA County's approval of the final tract map for this project. This should occur in 2002. Trails for use by hikers and equestrians will soon be available to the public.

● **Southport.** LA County now owns the 442.5-acre Southport property due to non-payment of property taxes. Southport abuts the northern border of Indian Springs. SSMPA will ask the Conservancy to apply to the LA Board of Supervisors to donate this property to the Conservancy for a park, since it directly connects to existing Conservancy-owned parks and has no access for development.

● **Horner.** This 14-acre property is located immediately north of the 118 Freeway and abuts the eastern side of Canoga Ave. Efforts are underway to purchase it using Quimby Funds given to LA County from the Deer Lake Ranch development, plus additional funds from the developer of Deer Lake Ranch and also from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

### **2 Ways to Connect Conservancy-owned Rocky Oaks Park and Sage Ranch:**

1. From the 15-foot high, 12-foot wide culvert beneath the 118 Freeway between Rocky Oaks Park and Corriganville Park and from there to the Sage Ranch.

2. From the overpass of the 118 Freeway between Rocky Oaks Park and the Santa Susana Pass Road and from there to the Sage Ranch.

Both of these properties are on the Conservancy's acquisition list.

### **Acquisitions Needed to Connect Sage Ranch to Publicly-owned Las Virgenes Canyon:**

1. Needs agreement with both Brandeis Institute and Boeing Corp. to preserve the existing wildlife corridors through their properties.

2. Much land is owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy because of the agreements with Ahmanson Land Co. and Bob Hope, who still owns land in this area. However, additional acquisitions are needed to connect to the 101 Freeway.

## Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains (FPSSM)

Report by Nancy Razanski, President

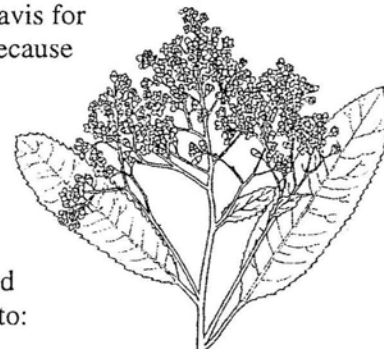
### Yard Sale Results

The FPSSM held two yard sales. The first one was on November 3, 2001 at Chatsworth Park South, at which we made \$150 after expenses. Our December 8, 2001 sale held at the Santa Susana School earned us \$261, with \$18 arriving between sales. We owe thanks to Marilyn Luckey via Gretha Davis for graciously allowing us to use their wonderful location. We held the second sale because we were rained out on November 4th. Thank you to all who helped.

The FPSSM is a tax deductible non-profit 501(c)(3) environmental affiliate of SSMPA. We also act as a booster club for the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. We recently donated \$500 for 2 dozen small Santa Susana signs for our park's perimeter.

### Sad News

Janet Lazik, Vice President of the FPSSM, lost her mother Molly. Molly passed away in late December 2001. Anyone wishing to send a sympathy card can write to: Janet Lazik, P.O. Box 7039, Northridge, CA 91327.



Toyon

### Did you know these facts about the San Fernando Valley?


The San Fernando Valley (SFV) is bounded roughly by the Santa Susana Mountains to the north and west, the Santa Monica Mountains to the south, and the San Gabriel Mountains to the east. It is a geographic area, not a political one, and lacks clearly demarcated political boundaries. It lies in LA County and includes all or portions of six cities: Burbank, Calabasas, Glendale, Hidden Hills, Los Angeles and San Fernando. A portion lies within LA, and the remainder lies on unincorporated land in LA County. The largest part of the SFV, both in area and population, belongs to the City of LA. Forty-seven percent of the land and 37 percent of the population of the City of LA are in the SFV. The LA portion of the SFV is nearly 20 miles across at its widest point (from Chatsworth to Tujunga) and 14 miles north to south (from Sylmar to Sherman Oaks). For planning purposes, LA is divided into 36 community plan areas. Fourteen are located in the SFV. At present, 27 "named" communities make up the LA portion of the SFV. None of these communities are legal entities; all are part of LA. The power to name a particular area rests with the LA City Council. In recent years, 3 new areas have been carved out and named: West Hills, Valley Village and Valley Glen. Most of what used to be called Sepulveda is now North Hills.

--From CSUN's "Report of Findings on the San Fernando Valley Economy - 2001-2002".

### Yes on Proposition 40!

Add your voice to the chorus of support for clean water and air, safe neighborhood parks and improvements to the state park system. Volunteer to help the Sierra Club in educating others about Prop 40, which will be on the March statewide ballot. Call (213) 387-4287 or go to [www.angeleschapter.org](http://www.angeleschapter.org) for more information.

### 👉 WANTED 👈

A willing and able volunteer with a computer  who would like to maintain the SSMPA membership data base. Time commitment: less than 1 hour each month. Call Susan at (818) 704-9304 if interested.



# UPCOMING HIKES

Hikers: wear lugsoles & hat; bring water, sunscreen and snack.

## Santa Susana Mountains Task Force (SSMTF)

Sunday, 1/ 27 - Stage Coach Trail Hike: Interpretative hike into history in our Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. Meet at 9:00 am for a 4 mi (700' gain) loop up the Stage Coach Trail. From Topanga Canyon Blvd., turn west on Devonshire and drive into Chatsworth Park South to the 2nd parking lot. Leader: Lee Baum (818) 341-1850.

## Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy/Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (310) 589-3200

Sun. 1/20 Towsley Canyon Park. Hike 2:30 to 4:30pm. Extended naturalist-led hike through some of the most scenic areas at Towsley Canyon. Learn more about the plants and animals you encounter on the way! Directions: Traveling north, take Calgrove exit from Golden State Fwy (5). Turn west back under the freeway and take the Old Road south, proceed to the first driveway on your right. Look for sign: "Ed Davis Park at Towsley Cyn." Park in back lot and meet at kiosk.  
Sat. 2/9 Towsley Canyon Park. 5 to 7pm. A traditional campfire program filled with stories, singing and fun. Bring some marshmallows and toasting stocks to make it a perfect evening! (directions above)  
Sun. 2/17 Towsley Canyon Park. 2:30 to 4:30pm. Have you ever looked at the brush-covered hills of California and wanted to know more about the plants found there? Here's an opportunity to gain new understanding and appreciation for the chaparral! (directions above)

## Rancho Simi Trail Blazers (805) 584-4400

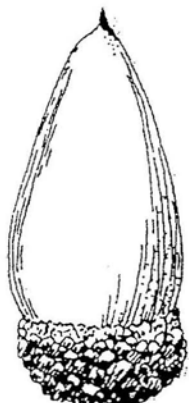
Sat. 1/19 Lower Stage Coach Trail Work Party. This work party's efforts will consist of lopping as well as trail tread work on the lower Stage Coach Trail out of Corriganville. Directions: Take 118 Fwy to Keuhner. Go south on Keuhner to Smith Rd. Turn left onto Smith Rd. Parking lot is at end of road. Tools will be provided. Bring 2-3 quarts of water, hat, sunscreen and gloves to work on the trail.  
Every Thursday Chumash Trail: Moderate paced 5 mi , approx. 1000' gain. Meet at 6 pm at trailhead. Directions: Take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, right on Flanagan Dr. Trailhead is at end of Flanagan Dr.  
Every Sunday Rocky Peak Trail: Strenuous, 5 mi , approx. 1000' gain. Meet at 5 pm at trailhead. Directions: Take 118 Fwy to Rocky Peak exit. Trailhead is north of Fwy.

Thank you for renewing your membership to SSMPA! Robert & Maureen Cates, John Otter, Jim Wolff, Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Roth, and David & Sally Gunther.  
A big welcome to new members: Linda Williams, Teena Takata, Elaine Levey, and the Shannon-Vaughn family.



## 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)     Family (\$15.00)  
 Business or Organization (\$25.00)     Life Member (\$100.00)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Interest/Expertise: \_\_\_\_\_

The purposes of the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association are the protection, preservation, restoration, and enhancement of the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills as open space lands and wildlife corridors linking the Los Padres National Forest and San Gabriel Mountains, including the Angeles National Forest, to the Santa Monica Mountains; as habitats for plants and animals native to the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills; as locales of unique geologic formations; as sites of ethnological, archaeological and historical interests; to provide passive recreational opportunities and environmental education opportunities; and, to support the acquisition of new public parks, open space and conservation easements, the expansion of existing parks, participate in the planning of park infrastructure and programs, and support said programs. To find out how you can volunteer for SSMPA, call Judy Garris, President, at 818-346-7654.

 **Mark your calendar**  

**SSMPA BOARD MEETINGS**  
@ Chatsworth Park South Visitors Center:  
Monday, February 4th at 7:30 p.m.

**SSMPA PROGRAM MEETINGS**  
@ Rockpointe Clubhouse:  
Monday, January 21, 2002, 7:15 p.m.  
Monday, February 18, 2002, 7:15 p.m.

Please note the renewal date on your label and send in your dues  if you wish to continue your SSMPA membership and receive the newsletter. If you are current with your dues, kindly disregard this notice. If you are a Life Member, we thank you and invite your continued support with periodic donations to help meet the costs of producing this newsletter.

**SSMPA Executive Board 2001-2002**

Judy Garris, President	818-346-7654
Dorian Keyser, Vice President, Program Chair	818-345-3795
Sandra Johnson, Recording Secretary	818-341-0341
Diana Dixon-Davis, Treasurer	818-341-4242
Jim Shirley, Member at Large	818-888-7631
Susan Gerke, Member at Large, Newsletter Editor	818-704-9304
Holly Huff, Member at Large	805-526-0961
Jan Miller, Member at Large	818-702-0854

**About this newsletter:** If you would like to submit an article for publication, write to SSMPA, Attn: Newsletter Editor, P.O. Box 4831, Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831 or call Susan Gerke at (818) 704-9304.



Santa Susana Mountain Park Association &  
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