



Volume 30, Issue 23

Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

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

November 2002 Newsletter

And the land was saved

The Santa Susana Mountain Park Association is a non-profit citizen's environmental organization whose purpose is to protect and preserve open space lands and wildlife corridors in the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills.

The group has supported and shaped legislation in the form of California state park bond measures that enabled it to acquire and thus preserve a large area in the hills above Chatsworth, now called the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park comprised of 670 acres.

The old stagecoach property, a portion of the old road that once was a vital artery between LA and San Francisco is located on a portion of the park and is in the National Register of Historic Places.

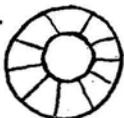
In 1972, public interest in the rugged, scenic and open space was evoked before the acquisition of the property through two major public hike-ins in which more than 10,000 people participated. During these hike-ins, docents from the area revealed the ecological and historical significance of the area, citing the Native American culture, history of the old stagecoach road, legends and folklore.

In March of that year, the community held an old-fashioned county fair in Chatsworth Park South. Local civic and community groups and businesses donated all or part of the proceeds earned at the fair to the park project.

A major part of \$10,000 for the \$50,000 down payment paid from association funds was contributed through the fair donations. The Northwest LA Resource Conservation District contributed a total of \$40,000 of the down payment on 265 acres adjacent to the old stagecoach trail property. These donations marked the beginning of the land acquisition procedures.

SSMPA held the land until the money from the 1974 California State Park Bond Funds could be used to purchase the property for the CA State Dept. of Parks and Rec.

During the bicentennial year, funds from the 1976 CA State Park Bond Measure were used to purchase more than two-thirds of the 178-acre National Register parcel. There currently is a fair-sized amount of acres still available for purchase and must be acquired by State Parks in order to prevent development.

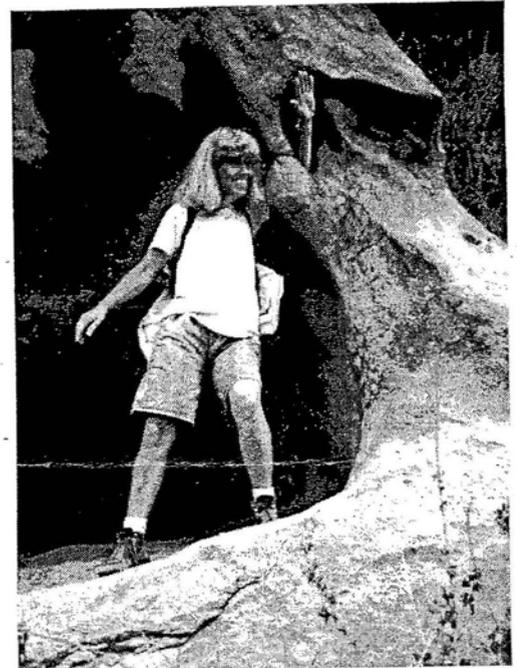


SSMPA General Membership Meeting: Monday, November 18, 2002

Our next general meeting will be held on Monday, November 18th. We'll be sure to have a speaker with interesting things to share and will discuss local issues. And, of course, we'll serve Mary Gorman's superb homemade cookies. (Thank you, Mary!) Please come.

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

Members are invited to attend 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 at 7:30 p.m. Refreshments are served at program meetings.



sandstone boulders
immense haunting otherworldly
they rise up like sculptures
gargantuan mounds of subtle color
reaching skyward in a froth of
craggy shapes rounded by the wind
smooth contoured formations
with sometime windows
rocks made of sandstone
seemingly holding the earth in place

Susan Gerke

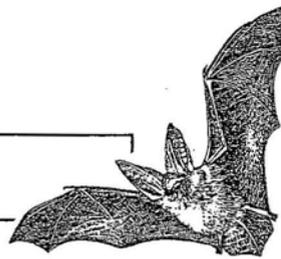


Thank you for renewing your SSMPA membership:
Midge Downer, Audrey Hedlund, Larry Merken, & new
Life Members Carolyn Oppenheimer & Joan Weaver.

Welcome to our new members:
James Nicholson, Susan Bradshaw and Leona Ward.

**Santa Susana Mountain Park Association
Roster for 2002-2003**

President Jan Miller	Vice President Dorian Keyser
Recording Secretary Patty Miller	Treasurer Diana Dixon-Davis <i>diana.dixon.davis1@juno.com</i>
Corresponding Secretary Open	Member at Large Judy Garris <i>nature@lafn.org</i>
Member at Large Sandra Johnson	Member at Large Teena Takata
Member at Large Open	Member at Large Open



The Flying Mammal of Our Hills

Bats are mammals. They have hair, nurse their young, and produce body heat internally. They are the only mammals that can actually fly. The

presence of bats is an indicator of a healthy ecosystem. Besides being important predators of insects (one bat can eat 600 mosquitoes an hour, or 3,000 insects in one night), they provide great services to the ecosystem in terms of pollination, seed dispersal and fertilizer/nutrient flow. Bats are essential to nature's balance.

Of the 27 species of bats found in California, all are insect eaters except for one species that feeds on the nectar, pollen and fruit of desert plants. Bats live in a number of different habitats in the Simi Hills, including caves, on cliffs and in oak woodlands. [Editor's note: I enjoy watching bats do their aerial feeding ballets on my dusk-time walks on the trails near the Eagles Nest and DWP-owned properties behind Chatsworth Oaks Park.]

Bats are long-lived (up to 30 years for some species) and reproduce slowly; generally only one offspring per year, in early summer.

Because of their high metabolic rate, bats require a lot of food. They forage for insects at night, resting between foraging runs in night roosts. Many species augment their night vision with sonar abilities known as echolocation. When hunting, bats emit short bursts of supersonic sound (to 50 bursts per second at frequencies to the bats' highly sensitive ears, somewhat in the manner of man-made radar). By this guidance, the insects are located and caught. This ability is so refined that bats are able to tell one type of moth from another and they can avoid obstacles no wider than a piece of thread. They tend to avoid people. They may swoop close to you while catching insects but are not interested in your hair.

What can we do to encourage bats to live in our area?

1. Allow logs, stumps and rock crevices to become natural bat roosts.
2. Ensure foraging habitat by protecting ponds and streams.
3. Use pesticides sparingly or not at all.
4. Conserve open spaces.
5. Build artificial roosts where natural habitat is limited (you can send for a copy of a Bat House Design Plan c/o this newsletter).
6. Share the news that bats are beneficial animals. ✍

Hello, Chatsworth Lake Manorians: A clean-up party in a specific area of the nearby hills will take place on Sat., Nov. 9 at 9am. Bring gloves, leaf rake, 2 trash bags & your sense of humor. Meet at the east end of Alta Way. See you there!

**Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains
Roster for 2002-2003**

President Pearl Turbush	Vice President Nancy Razanski
Recording Secretary Gretha Davis <i>gretha.d@earthlink.net</i>	Corresponding Secretary Cheryl Rietveld <i>cherylriet@msn.com</i>
Treasurer Chuck Turbush	Simi Valley Area Chair Janet Lazik <i>jslazik@hotmail.com</i>
Santa Clarita Area Chair George Riippi	San Fernando Area Chair Jon Lauritzen <i>jon@lauritzen2000.org</i>
Member at Large Hal Lovett <i>shlovett@pacbell.net</i>	Member at Large Andrea De Young <i>ihelma100@aol.com</i>

Founder of both FPSSM and SSMMA: Janice Hinkston

From Judy Garris:

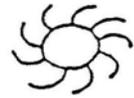
I have been reading the EIR for Topanga Condo Project. The developer plans 159 units in five buildings right on the trailhead of Devil canyon. **Have you walked in Devil Canyon?** Unless we get easement rights into this canyon, we may lose access into a very special canyon with its year-round spring fed stream and wind/water etched walls. I always save this canyon for the hotter days; it's so much cooler than some other Santa Susana hikes. We like to picnic in a small Oak Grove where an unusual Oak and Sycamore embrace. The deadline for comments and suggestions for the EIR is November 20. Call me at 818-346-7654 if you wish to borrow the EIR. Also, join me at the next **Santa Susana Mountain Task Force meeting** to help set up restructuring our branch of the Sierra Club. Date: **Tuesday, Nov. 19th at 7:00 pm at the Visitors Center at Chatsworth Park South.** Goodies will be served.

On Preserving Wildlife Corridors

These days, state budget cuts are making it a challenge for agencies and organizations to save open space and wildlife corridors. The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy's funding from Prop A money has been reduced. Sources of funds for acquisitions include some available to the Conservancy from California State Proposition 12, a grant from the Wildlife Conservation Board, and, hopefully, a grant from LA Proposition A Excess Funds allowed to LA County's Fifth Supervisorial District, headed by Mike Antonovich. Starting in 1981, the Santa Susana Mountains Park Association has helped to preserve undeveloped lands, open spaces, and wildlife corridors in LA County. This has included working closely with the Conservancy and other public entities and private groups to help raise funds via grants, appropriations, and propositions. Preserving these areas is important for equestrians, hikers, mountain bikers and naturalists, and is very important for the future in view of the anticipated growth of Southern California. Although there are many competing needs in other areas of the district for these limited funds, we have requested and are hopeful that some of the LA County Fifth Supervisorial District's Proposition A Excess Funds go to help with land purchases in the district.



UPCOMING HIKES



Hikers: Wear lugsoles & hat. Bring water, sunscreen and snack or lunch.

Sierra Club Hikes

Sun. 11/17 & 12/15 Stagecoach Trail Hike: Interpretative hike into history in our Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. Meet at 9 am for a 4 mi (700' gain) loop up the Stagecoach Trail. From Topanga Cyn Blvd, turn west on Devonshire and drive into Chatsworth Pk South to the 2nd parking lot by the Rec Bldg. Call Lee Baum at (818) 341-1850 for further info.

Sierra Club/Santa Susana Mountains Task Force Hikes

Sun. 11/10: Missile Silo Site, SFV: Mod. paced 8 mi., 800' gain hike. Great mountain and valley views. Meet 9am at Caballero trailhead sign (E side Reseda Blvd across from Braemar Country Club entrance - 2 mi south of Ventura Blvd). Bring 2 qts water and lunch.

Sat., 11/23: Las Virgenes Trail: Easy-paced. Meet at 10 am. Take 101 W, exit Las Virgenes, turn right, go to end of road. Judy Garris: (818) 346-7654.

Sat., 12/14: To be announced. Call Judy Garris: (818) 346-7654.

Sierra Club/Santa Monica Mountains Task Force Hikes

Sun. 11/10: Corral Cyn to Kanan Rd: Easy 7-mi hike on scenic trail through oak woodlands and chaparral. Car shuttle. Meet 8:30 am Newton Cyn trailhead lot (Kanan Rd 4.5 mi N of PCH, N of 1st tunnel). Bring water and lunch.

Sun. 11/24: Tapia Park to Century Lake Loop: Easy 7 mi, 1000' loop hike on trail and dirt road into Malibu Creek State Park. Meet 8:30 am at Tapia Park (6 mi from Ventura Fwy, 4 mi from PCH on Las Virgenes/Malibu Cyn Rd; lot fee). Bring lunch.

Get Out and Vote on November 5th!

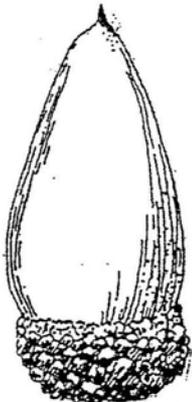
Proposition 50 is the water bond on the November ballot. Its passage is essential to the future of conservation in our state. Endorsed by our major environmental groups, it will implement sound water policy, support the Bay-Delta, and provide funds for watershed protection around the state. These watershed protection funds are indispensable if we are to acquire the lands needed to protect the endangered wildlife of Southern California. Close to \$1 billion will go to the Dept. of Fish and Game to protect land. Material about the measure is available on the website: www.prop50yes.com.

Proposition 51 is called the Traffic Congestion Relief and Safe School Bus Act. While primarily geared to transportation, conservationists should know that it will also create the nation's largest environmental trust fund -- a permanent and dedicated stream of funds to acquire wildlife habitat as mitigation. The amount is \$130 million/year. The transportation aspects of Proposition 51 are also very progressive. It takes currently existing taxes paid on motor vehicles and redirects this to needed transportation projects with a heavy emphasis on transit. Over the long run, it will help California get away from sprawling patterns of development. A small number of good projects also receive earmarks, reflecting the real-world need to raise funds to collect signatures, etc. The sponsor of the measure is the highly respected Planning and Conservation League. Proposition 51 will also, of course, replace unsafe school buses. You can learn more about Proposition 51 at www.voteyesonprop51.org.



SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAIN PARK ASSOCIATION

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



valley oak

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, come to our next general meeting and talk to us!



For your calendar



SSMPA BOARD MEETINGS

@ Chatsworth Park South Visitors Center:

Monday, Nov. 4, 2002, 7:30 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 2, 2002, 7:30 p.m.

SSMPA PROGRAM MEETINGS

@ Rockpointe Clubhouse:

Monday, Nov. 18, 2002, 7:15 p.m.

(no general meeting in Dec.)



Western Kingbird

About this newsletter: If you have comments or would like to submit an article for publication in this newsletter, write to SSMPA, Attn: Newsletter Editor, P.O. Box 4831, Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831.

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.



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Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains
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