



Santa Susana Mountain Park Association October 2004 Newsletter

Volume 30, Issue 40

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

NEWS FROM THE SSMPA BOARD

On Monday, Oct. 4, the Board of Directors of SSMPA held a joint meeting with the Board members of the Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains. Reports were given on illegal bulldozing in Box Canyon, the current status of the Deerlake Ranch proposed development, the work of Save Chatsworth, Inc., Eagles Nest, and the Peachtree property. It was decided that on Sunday, Oct. 10th, the directors of both organizations would tour several open space properties that are relatively near the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park.

Other items discussed included the viability of hiring a lobbyist in Sacramento and the potential acquisition of a large cargo container in Chatsworth which might become available to SSMPA.

Following the joint meeting, the SSMPA Board voted unanimously to donate \$500 to Save Chatsworth, Inc. for the purpose of negotiating the settlement between Presidio, Linda Corbridge and the Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority. The Board members believe this is a worthy cause to protect against further development north of the Deerlake Ranch project. The present settlement obtains several key features. Corbridge, the property owner north of Deerlake who recently purchased 40 acres then sued the Deerlake Ranch developer and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy alleging prescriptive access easements, is limited to development of four homes and may not extend or assign access and utility rights to others. Corbridge, as part of the settlement, is granting a conservation easement to provide key trail linkages and open space areas over much of her acreage.

Please see the following page for important information regarding Save Chatsworth, Inc.

NOTE: The By-laws of SSMPA state that the general membership must vote to approve expenditures over \$250. Please plan to attend the SSMPA general meeting on Monday, October 18th when the issue of SSMPA donating \$500 to Save Chatsworth, Inc. will be presented & voted upon.

General Membership Program Meeting Monday, October 18, 2004:

Kathryn Gafney will be our special guest and speaker at this meeting. Kathryn is a graduate student in landscape architecture, concentrating on environmental planning, at UC Berkeley. She is doing a professional report in conjunction with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. The report will involve a project master plan for the Browns Canyon watershed that will identify and prioritize sites for potential acquisition by SMMC in both the urbanized and non-urbanized portion of the watershed, with a focus on developing habitat for wildlife and nature parks.

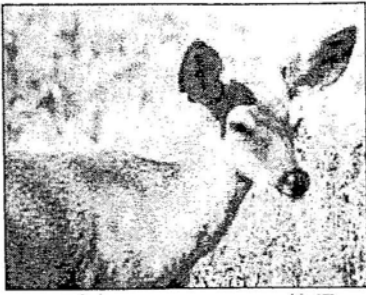
In your hiking experiences near the watershed areas, what have you observed? Have you seen wildlife? Kathryn will poll the audience and give members an opportunity to take part in her study at the meeting! It promises to be a fun and interesting evening. Come and participate with us!

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 generally conclude by 9:00 p.m. at the Rockpointe Clubhouse, 22300 Devonshire, Chatsworth, on the south side, 1 block before entering Chatsworth Park South. Refreshments are served at program meetings. ♣

www.saveamericasforests.org

“For me, the forest is a kind of a home.”
“When I’m in a forest I feel like I’m almost in a cathedral.”
“It’s a rather sacred place.”

Dr. Jane Goodall



SAVE CHATSWORTH, INC. is a coalition of homeowners and local non-profit organizations, dedicated to saving Chatsworth from excessive, irresponsible development.

Save Chatsworth, Inc. was founded in July of 2002, with the following mission statement: "To ensure that all future development remains consistent with the existing rural character and heritage of Chatsworth." Our immediate goal was the reduction of negative impacts on the Chatsworth community from the construction of the Deerlake Ranch Development Project, and over the course of three years of negotiations

and meetings with dedicated and committed community members, the development project was reduced from 488 to 375 homes, a reduction of over 100 homes.

The current project plan includes about 55 designated equestrian properties, and 50% of the lots are 15,000 square feet or over. In addition, numerous community benefits have been obtained, including traffic mitigation measures, improved and extended equestrian and hiking trails, money for the Supervisor's discretionary fund to be used expressly for the benefit the local community, open space preservation and parkland, and public sewers for the Twin Lakes community just north of the 118 freeway at Topanga Canyon. While we may not have gotten everything that we wanted, we are pleased that we did accomplish so much, and that the end result is a development project significantly more in keeping with the existing Chatsworth community than what was originally proposed.

For the future, there are other proposed development projects that will require careful scrutiny, and the potential subdivision and re-zoning of older existing equestrian properties and stables, when they are sold, is another issue before us. With our new 501(c)(3) status, Save Chatsworth hopes to continue on as an organization that can effectively serve the Chatsworth community by its ability to review and protest if need be county and city land use issues.

Save Chatsworth is still working on one outstanding issue regarding Deerlake Ranch. When Deerlake was originally proposed, a 10-foot wide strip of open space dedicated to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy was intended to serve as a perimeter buffer to deter housing development on property to the north of Deerlake. Now easement will be given to private property owners to the north of Deerlake, so therefore one of the "selling points" of the Deerlake Project to the community - that there would be no development north of Deerlake Ranch - will no longer be in existence. Negotiations between the developer, Presidio Partners, the community, private property owners and the Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority (governing body for the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy) are on going to protect open space and the existing trail system, and maintain the connection with other open space areas, such as Michael D. Antonovich Regional Park in Browns Canyon. SSMPA has been proposed as the holder of a conservation easement for the open space property, which would be of wonderful benefit to the community, and instill confidence that this easement would be upheld.

We do need help - for attorney fees during this critical legal process, we are in need of additional funding. Donations are greatly appreciated, and are fully tax-deductible. If we are unable to pursue these negotiations to the fullest extent, there is more than a good chance that someday these open space areas will go to private ownership and hence development.

Please contact us via our website, www.savechatsworth.org, e-mail us at info@savechatsworth.org, write to us at 21704 Devonshire St., #133, Chatsworth, CA 91311 or call (818) 831-5650 for more information.

--Vanessa Watters, President, Save Chatsworth, Inc.

PROGRESS

by: Carla L. Henry

*Lilacs bulldozed, crushed under
Lilac Country Lane
Stream trickles with pesticides
Hidden Creek Golf Course
Eagle's riparian land parceled
Eagle's Nest Estates
Six thousand oaks destroyed
Oakwood Community
Deer haven't roamed in 20 years
Deer Lake Homes
Chumash diseased and scattered
Indian Oaks Condos
All that remains is sky
Mountain View Park*



Mountain Lion/Cougar
Felis concolor

Foundation for the Preservation
of the Santa Susana Mountains

“Help Save Our
Local Natural Areas”
On Saturday, 11/13/04

- Join us at Casa de Carlos 5:30-6:30 PM for a “Meet & Greet”, social hour
- Buy your own drinks
- Stay for a wonderful Mexican buffet-dinner at \$15 per adult, \$7.50 for children under 10 years old, starting at 6:30 PM
- Casa de Carlos will give a percentage to FPSSM.

Ask a Casa de Carlos' Hostess for a flyer!

If you have any questions please call:

- Pearl Turbush, President of FPSSM (661) 242-5506
- Nancy Razanski, Vice President of FPSSM (818) 341-3512



RSVP by 11/5/04 by calling (818) 341-3512 to reserve your space. Leave your name and phone number, please. Make checks payable to FPSSM and mail to P.O. Box 4831, Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831.

Thank you, Casa de Carlos for your generous support!

FPSSM is a 501c3 organization, if you are unable to make this fundraising event, and would like to give a tax-deductible donation; we would greatly appreciate it!

New Wild Lion Cubs and How the Proposed On/Off Ramps at the Rocky Peak Exit on the 118 Freeway Could Harm Wildlife

Our wildlife corridors are thinning. It's becoming harder and harder for mountain lions to survive with increasing urbanization. Mountain lions are generally solitary animals that distribute themselves in home ranges that only partially overlap. The home range of an adult male often spans over 100 square miles; females generally use smaller areas.

The last known male mountain lion in the Santa Monica Mountains and the one known female in that range have recently produced a litter of four kittens, as reported by Seth Riley, wildlife ecologist for the National Park Service in the Santa Monicas. The cubs have been affixed with transmitters to track their growth and progress in coming months. They will have only a 50% chance of surviving a year in their limited habitat and may be forced to cross dangerous freeways to reach neighboring mountain ranges and terrain, such as the Simi Hills, the Santa Susana Pass and the Santa Susana Mountains, Angeles National Forest and Los Padres National Forest.

An upcoming conference, "Re-Enchanting the City III," on Saturday, 10/16, will address freeways and similar issues regarding wildlife movement. Those attending will find ways to assist Southern California wild animal populations from rapidly diminishing. Just a few of the speakers will be Dr. John Hadidian, Humane Society of the U.S., Dr. Ray Sauvajot, National Park Service, and Paul Caron, CalTrans. Some of the workshops are "Local Projects Protecting Wildlife," "Native American Talking Circle; Nature as Healer," "Barrier to Diversity; CA Wildlife, the 118 Freeway & Other Dilemmas," "Rivers & Streams: Important Wildlife Corridors" and "Local Projects Protecting Wildlife." These are only some of the interesting topics that will be presented. This important conference is free, and a light lunch will be provided to those staying for the afternoon workshops. Now is your chance to make a difference. Reserve your space by calling Dr. Rosemarie White @ (818) 769-1521 or go to <http://www.qmrnet.com/ESTFSignup.html>.



Mountain lion kittens, or cubs, have blackish-brown spots, dark rings around their tails, and pale blue eyes.

Report on 12 Apostles Foothills Alterations

The "Twelve Apostles," a 68 million-year-old sandstone cliff, is located east of Box Canyon on the L.A./Ventura County border near Chatsworth Lake Manor. Looming high above rooftops, it forms a striking backdrop for nearby existing homes and stands out as a dramatic monument from afar. Certain landowners in the area want it preserved -- another group of landowners/developers are readying the area just below it for future development projects. Two miles of old hiking trails were bulldozed into roads directly under the Twelve Apostles in May of this year, in preparation for the building of homes. As the streambed and waterfall that are directly through the property were not taken into consideration, and because several State-listed rare *Hemizonia minthornii* plants were destroyed, neighbors placed calls and e-mails to Federal, State and local government officials expressing concern that necessary measures were not being taken to protect plant and animal species in the area, as well as the streambed and seasonal waterfall that flow through the property. There is great concern about the filling in of the Army Corps of Engineers-designated streambed, the burying under of previously cited trash and the cliffside bulldozing which exacerbates erosion and storm runoff.

L.A. County Supervisor Antonovich's office expressed interest in the destruction to the nature trails around Thompson and Knapp and other damage, not only because of the severity of the issue but because the area is located fairly close to the county line and could have an effect in L.A. County.

**"This is an amazing piece of property. Some consideration should be given to protecting it."
--a resident of Chatsworth Lake Manor**

RE-ENCHANTING THE CITY III

Overpasses
Under Crossings
Wild Corridors



On Mothers' Day, just days prior to when the major bulldozing occurred, some local residents, led by naturalist David Ecklund, hiked up the footpaths under the Twelve Apostles to view the area, learn about plants and document the Santa Susana tarplant in its natural habitat. Participants of the tour came away with a renewed appreciation of the area's breathtaking natural resources. ❁

LOCAL UPCOMING HIKES & EVENTS

HIKES:

Sierra Club / Santa Susana Mountains Task Force Hikes

Sunday, 10/17 - Stagecoach Trail: Interpretative "hike into history" in our Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. Meet 9:00 a.m. for a moderate 4 mi (700' gain) loop up the Stage Coach Trail. Hike up the Devil's Slide and learn the colorful history of the park. From Topanga Cyn Blvd., turn W on Devonshire, drive into Chatsworth Park S to the 2nd parking lot. Wear long pants, lugsoles are preferred, bring 2 qts. water & snack. Serious rain cancels. Leader: Lee Baum (818) 341-1850. Assts.: Judy Garris & Bob Galletly.

NOTE: For all Sierra Club/Santa Susana Mountains Task Force outings, participants are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you wish to read the liability waiver before you chose to participate on an outing, go to <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>, or contact Outings Dept. at (415) 977-5528.

Saturday, 10/30 - Devil Canyon Halloween Hike & Potluck Picnic: Come all ye ghouls and beasties for an easy-paced 5 mi, 300' gain Halloween picnic hike along the stream. Haunt Devil Cyn between eerie walls of sandstone where the devilish Santa Ana winds howl above the trees. We pause to note witch plants are witch. Meet 9am N end of Topanga Cyn Blvd (just north of 118 Fwy). Bring tricks or treats to share with 6, cup, plate, utensils, 2 qts water; wear shoes with good tread; long pants recommended. Ldr: Judy Garris. Assts.: Bob Galletly, Lee Baum.

EVENTS:

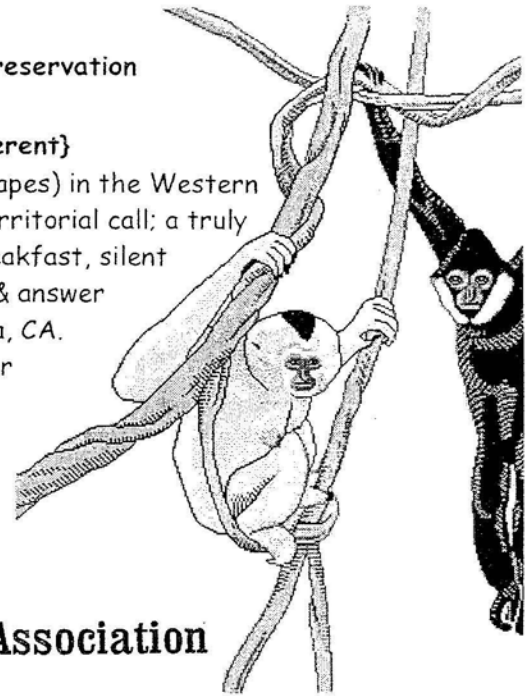
Endangered Species Task Force, Sierra Club Angeles Chapter

Re-Enchanting The City III Conference

Saturday, 10/16: Griffith Park. Please see p. 4 for a description and reservation information.

Breakfast with the Gibbons in Santa Clarita {for something different}

Saturday, 11/6: Enjoy a guided tour of the largest group of gibbons (small apes) in the Western Hemisphere (infants, too). Come and hear the gibbons sing their haunting territorial call; a truly remarkable and unforgettable experience! Included in the tour is a light breakfast, silent auction (cash or check only), lecture by founder Alan Mootnick, and question & answer session. 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Gibbon Conservation Center in Santa Clarita, CA. There will be a charge. Ldr: Susan Gerke. Concessionaire: Alan Mootnick. For directions and more info, go to www.gibboncenter.org, or call Patti Dahle at (661) 943-4915 or call the Center at (661) 296-2737.



Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

invites you to JOIN / RENEW (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 contribution lend your support. Make your check payable to SSMPA and send to SSMPA, P.O. Box 4831, Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior or Student (\$5.00) | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual (\$10.00) | <input type="checkbox"/> Family (\$15.00) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member (\$100.00) | <input type="checkbox"/> Business / Organization (\$25.00) | |

Name: _____ Phone: _____
 Street Address: _____ E-mail: _____
 City / State / Zip: _____
 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 participate, contact Jan Miller at (818) 702-0854.

To read the by-laws of SSMPA, please go to its internet group (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SSMPA/>) where you will also find many documents and resources relevant to the issues of concern to SSMPA and its members. If you have any questions regarding the website, please feel free to call Reid Bogert at (323) 661-4686.

Thanks for renewing: Jeff Pomerantz, Marilyn Stout, Bob, Galletly, Leona Ward, John Beuerman, Audrey Hedlund, Bob & Laurie Dager, Daniel & Heike Bernstein, Charlene Vincent, Sandra Johnson, Edith & Samuel Roth, Agnes & James Talley, Mary Thompson, Pat Jump. **Welcome new member:** Maria Villicanta. **New Life Members:** Vanessa & Mark Watters. **Thank you for your donation:** Jeff Pomerantz.

Subscribers & Members: We appreciate you! Please note the renewal date on your label. If you are a Life Member, we thank you and invite your continued support with periodic donations to help SSMPA meet the costs of producing this newsletter.

Susan Gerke, Editor

Santa Susana Mountain Park Association &
Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains
P.O. Box 4831
Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit
US Postage
Paid
Van Nuys, CA
Permit No. 761

LIFE Member
Nancy Razanski
22149 James Alan Circle
Chatsworth CA 91311-2051