

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2014 - NEWSLETTER

WILDLIFE CORRIDOR IS A GO !

Good news! Construction will begin January 2015 for a wildlife corridor that will be routed under the I01 Freeway in the Liberty Canyon Area. This project has just received the necessary funding from the California Wildlife Conservation Board with a grant of \$650,000. This underpass wildlife corridor will enable mountain lions, bobcats and other critters to safely move underneath the I01 freeway and extend their wildlife corridor. Mountain lions, especially, need more roaming space. They can travel 50 miles in a day.

At Liberty Canyon, there is a narrow, concrete underpass, but it is not large enough for the mountain lions to travel through. With the new access, these big cats will be able to reach the open space to the north, including the Simi Hills and Los Padres National Forest.

The new underpass will include a seven-acre habitat of bushes, trees, and tall grasses. This project will enhance wildlife habitat by providing a secure environment for all animals to pass through. This project was supported by State Senator Fran Pavley, the Sierra Club, and many environmental groups in Southern California.

THE EDGE REVISITED

LATE NEWS!!

The Edge (Sweetwater Mesa Project) WILL NOT be heard (as we all expected), by the California Coastal Commission (CCC) the first week in January 2015. The meeting will probably be scheduled by the CCC for the first week in March, in San Diego. The proposed project is planned for construction in a remote, undeveloped swath of some 2800 acres of ESHA designated land (Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area) in the hills above Malibu. The site is within the boundaries of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and is bordered on two sides by public parkland.

The Edge project has been denied three times previously. While the project has been revised, it seriously conflicts with sections of both the California Coastal Act and the newly ratified Los Angeles County Local Coastal Plan. Grading for the homes is still massive, with plans for some 42,000 cubic yards of bulldozing. The homes and auxiliary buildings will have the same total square footage as the original project. The 7800-foot waterline extension has not been reduced and will deeply cut a wide footprint down the hill through sensitive native habitat. The homes are to be built in identified landslide areas and in a wild land area that is frequently subjected to dangerous fires. The project will create habitat fragmentation and loss, visual blight, and severe landslide and wildfire risks to life and property.

Many environmental groups and public agencies are opposing the Edge project in its present form. We need a large turnout for the CCC meeting when the hearing for the Edge project is on the agenda. That will be difficult if the hearing is scheduled in San Diego instead of a closer venue.

BROAD BEACH EROSION

The California Coastal Commission needs to find a balanced solution to address erosion in Broad Beach, which is a shoreline neighborhood in Malibu facing coastal erosion issues.

At the same time, the CCC needs to protect coastal resources and public access at Broad Beach. A proposed project would retain the now unpermitted and deteriorating coastal rock armoring which continues to contribute to long-term beach erosion.

Given the known coastal impacts of rock revetments, this project in its current form, is unsustainable and threatens to have negative environmental impacts in the long term. Factors, such as climate change, changing precipitation patterns, and similar concerns need to be taken into account so as to come up with a balanced and successful plan for the future.

MESSAGE FROM OUR FRIENDS in the LOS PADRES CHAPTER (edited)

"A gentle creature glides quietly through the ocean waters of the Santa Barbara Channel. Majestic, beautiful and endangered. Blue Whales, the largest creatures ever to live on our planet. But their sheer size does not make them immune to the dangers caused by man.

... Threats from ship strikes (international shipping lanes are in the path of migrating whales), entanglement in commercial nylon fishing nets, construction work on offshore platforms, swallowing of plastic dumped into our oceans, toxic fluids dumped from offshore drilling rigs and disruptions of migration patterns by U.S. Navy sonar testing are causing injury and death to blue whales.

My new Sierra Club campaign 'Let Blue Whales LIVE!' will work to stop these dangerous activities. Public outreach and education, meetings with decision makers and speaking out at public meetings will...help.

... Join with me as we work together to focus attention on the plight of these gentle giants and seek an end to these deadly activities which are happening right off our coast. People like YOU who will make a difference." By Jim Hines, Coordinator

DEAR SENATOR FEINSTEIN

The Sierra Club supports "full funding" of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) in order to ensure that the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA) can receive \$3.76 million to finally complete the Zuma and Trancas Canyons acquisitions. Zuma Beach, one of the beaches within the SMMNRA boundaries, alone recorded a record 6 million visitors this year. The LWCF is a national park fund from off-shore oil drilling royalties and does not depend on tax dollars. Please, fully fund LWCF for FY2015 and thereby protect important conservation and recreation areas, and boost our local economies.

PUERCO CANYON GOES PUBLIC –

MRCA ACQUIRES VAST OPEN SPACE IN SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS

WOW!! A while back, escrow closed on one of the largest public parkland acquisitions in the coastal Santa Monica Mountains in recent years. Escrow was closed through the efforts of the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA). This land, the Cameron Nature Preserve in Puerco Canyon, was purchased from James Cameron, film director. The result will be to permanently protect 703 acres of core coastal habitat. This new land purchase provides crucial connections for intra-mountain movement of mountain lions, mule deer, bobcats, and gray foxes. This land supports a vast range of plant communities, including chaparral, coastal sage scrub, native grasslands, and oak woodlands. The terrain is gentle and the views are beautiful wide panoramas of the coastline.

This purchase was funded through efforts of the California Wildlife Conservation Board, California State Coastal Conservancy, Los Angeles County, and Mr. Cameron, as well as support of former Supervisor Zev Yaroslavy, State Senator Fran Pavley, and other public officials.

TRAILS...TRAILS...TRAILS

The SMMTF oversees the Sierra Club Trail Crew, which has been out and about, building and maintaining trails in The Santa Monica Mountains, and adjacent areas, for some forty years. This year (2014) the volunteer SC crew contributed 2660 hours of trail work, from Will Rogers to Pt. Mugu. And, the versatile crew even took part in weeding work at the lovely Malibu Lagoon.

... Just learned that the Chumash Trail, which we worked on in October, along with the SMM Trails Council Crew, has slipped partially down the hill and into the parking lot. A landslide due to the recent December rain deluge. More trail work challenges in the year ahead.

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MOUNTAIN BIKES - California State parks recently announced that it is maintaining a regulation that all natural-surface trails (dirt trails) are open to pedestrians (hikers) and closed to all other users. And, so, such trails will be closed to mountain bikes unless specifically posted as "specifically open" to bike use. This is a final ruling, and it is published in the California Code of Regulations. It is unlikely that it will be changed in the future.

ELECTION RESULTS - The Angeles Chapter has just concluded voting for members to serve on at-large positions for the Chapter Executive Committee. Four members were elected: George Denny, Sharon Koch, Ray Hiemstra, and Jerard Wright.

Many thanks to all candidates who were willing to run for the Ex-Com, and, appreciation to all members who took the time to vote for the candidates.

HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR AHEAD, AS THE SMMTF CONTINUES ITS MISSION TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE CULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES IN OUR MOUNTAINS...AND BEYOND!!!

WE SELDOM ASK ... BUT... WE NEED YOUR HELP TO SUPPORT OUR CONSERVATION WORK. YOUR DONATIONS HELP THE SMMTF TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT RESOURCES & OPEN SPACE IN THE SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS.

WHAT WE DO: HOLD ACTION MEETINGS; LEAD HIKES; BUILD TRAILS; ADVISE POLICY MAKERS; LOBBY GOVERNMENT; MONITOR LAND USE; SUPPORT LEGAL ACTIONS; PUBLISH A NEWSLETTER; IDENTIFY PRIORITIES; PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION. PLEASE DONATE...\$15 TO \$50 DOLLARS, OR MORE. **THANK YOU!**

Send your check, made out to SMMTF, to our treasurer:
Mary Jane McMaster, 9046 Beverlywood St, Los Angeles, CA 90034

SMMTF WEBSITE

Visit the Santa Monica Mountains Task Force website. You can access the website and be up-to-date on all Task Force conservation news, scheduled activities, events, trail work, outings, and other timely information: smmtf.org/











If you have conservation news, events, photos or other Sierra Club related information that could be posted on the website, email full descriptions to our webmaster Bill Vanderberg, so he can evaluate these items for posting: bill.vanderberg@ca.rr.com

If you prefer to receive future SMMTF Newsletters by email, please let us know by emailing Sue Palmer at: rumpuskat@sbcglobal.net

*Newsletter Written by Taskforce Management Committee Representative –
 MaryAnn Webster, Chair
 Joan Weaver, Editor*

The Santa Monica Mountains Task Force is an activist committee dedicated to encouraging the protection of the Santa Monica Mountains while promoting the understanding and awareness of their natural values. The goals encompass maintaining open space and acquiring additional parkland. To achieve these goals, members participate in monthly meetings, recommend policy on the Santa Monica Mountains, lead outings to acquaint the public with the mountains, build and maintain trails.

SMMTF Activities January-February 2015

Sat 1/3/15	O: Santa Monica Mountains Trail Work	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Service/Stewardship	Moderate
Tue 1/6/15	O: Tue Conditioned Hikers: Mountaineers Route, Topanga Lookout, Saddle Peak	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Strenuous 16.3 Map or Directions
Tue 1/6/15	O: Tue Moderate Hikers/De Anza Park to Malibu Creek State Park	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Moderate
Sat 1/10/15	O: Santa Monica Mountains Trail Work	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Service/Stewardship	Moderate
Sun 1/11/15	O: Lemming Hike	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Moderate
Tue 1/13/15	O: Tue Conditioned Hikers: Malibu Creek SP to Paramount Ranch	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Strenuous 13.2 Map or Directions
Tue 1/13/15	O: Tue Moderate Hikers/ Tri Peaks (3010')	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Moderate
Tue 1/13/15	O: Tue Tiger Hikers	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Strenuous
Sat 1/17/15	O: Santa Monica Mountains Trail Work	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Service/Stewardship	Moderate
Sat 1/17/15	O: Millennium Loop Trail	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Moderate

Tue 1/20/15	O: Tue Conditioned Hikers: Malibu Cyn/Las Virgenes Rd to Saddle Pk	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Strenuous 13.3	Map or Directions
Tue 1/20/15	O: Tue Moderate Hikers/Sullivan Cyn Ridge Trail	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Moderate	
Tue 1/20/15	O: Tue Tiger Hikers	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Strenuous	
Sat 1/24/15	O: Santa Monica Mountains Trail Work	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Service/Stewardship	Moderate	
Tue 1/27/15	O: Tue Conditioned Hikers: Malibu Creek State Park, King Gillette Ranch	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Strenuous 10.4	Map or Directions
Tue 1/27/15	O: Tue Moderate Hikers/ Santa Ynez Cyn via Wirebreak	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Moderate	
Tue 1/27/15	O: Tue Tiger Hikers	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Strenuous	
Sat 1/31/15	O: Santa Monica Mountains Trail Work	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Service/Stewardship	Moderate	
Tue 2/3/15	O: Tue Conditioned Hikers: Mugu/La Jolla Ramble	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Strenuous 7.9	Map or Directions
Tue 2/3/15	O: Tue Moderate Hikers/ Buzzard's Roost (2507') from Encinal Cyn	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Moderate	
Tue 2/3/15	O: Tue Tiger Hikers	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Strenuous	
Sat 2/7/15	O: Santa Monica Mountains Trail Work	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Service/Stewardship	Moderate	
Tue 2/10/15	O: Tue Conditioned Hikers: Bienveneda-Leacock Trails to Will Rogers	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Strenuous 22.6	Map or Directions
Tue 2/10/15	O: Tue Moderate Hikers/Mishe Mokwa to Bony Peak	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Moderate	
Tue 2/10/15	O: Tue Tiger Hikers	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Strenuous	
Sat 2/14/15	O: Santa Monica Mountains Trail Work	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Service/Stewardship	Moderate	
Sat 2/14/15	O: Backbone Trail at Piuma Ridge	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Moderate	
Tue 2/17/15	O: Tue Conditioned Hikers: Sullivan Canyon, Ridge, and Murphy Ranch	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Strenuous 24.6	Map or Directions
Tue 2/17/15	O: Tue Moderate Hikers/Upper Mandeville Cyn Loop	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Moderate	

Tue 2/17/15	O: Tue Tiger Hikers	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Strenuous	
Sat 2/21/15	O: Santa Monica Mountains Trail Work	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Service/Stewardship	Moderate	
Tue 2/24/15	O: Tue Conditioned Hikers: Top of Topanga Overlook to W Red Rock Road	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Strenuous 19.0	Map or Directions
Tue 2/24/15	O: Tue Moderate Hikers/La Jolla/Ray Miller Trail	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Hike	Moderate	
Sat 2/28/15	O: Santa Monica Mountains Trail Work	Angeles Chp SMMTF Subcom	 Outing	Service/Stewardship	Moderate	