



Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

MAY 1997

A Non-Profit Organization, Inc'd. 1971

Volume 27, Number 4

OUR FUTURE

May's exciting General Meeting will begin at:

7:00 p.m. Monday, May 5, 1997 Glendale Federal Bank, Community Room, 21821 Devonshire Street, Chatsworth (one block east of Topanga Canyon Blvd.). Our program will begin at 7:30 with our special guest, Joanne Kerbavaz from San Diego, an agent for California Dept. of Parks and Recreation, who will be attending our meeting for the second time. For the last six weeks, Joanne has been evaluating our park for permanent status. At the conclusion of her remarks, time will be available for her to answer questions. She is continuing her solicitation of information and opinions, on topics such as a name for our park, the goals for usage, its future expansion, etc. See other pages for related articles.

Please come and thank Joanne for her hard work!

Notice of Public Hearing

On Thursday, May 8, 1997 after 9:30 a.m., the Los Angeles City Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing regarding the Proposed Transportation Element of the General Plan. The Proposed Element sets forth goals, objectives, and policies for the development of the City's transportation system to the year 2010. It also includes designations and mapping of the City's highways and freeways system.... (The information

we have received is that the City is now prepared to proceed with the extension of Topanga Canyon Boulevard north of the 118 and over the Santa Susana Mountains to the Santa Clarita Valley. The monster of massive development, the euphemism for destruction, of the natural habitat of many species of animals and plants has again reared its ugly bulldozer blade.... Copies of the preliminary staff report are available upon request... For additional information, please contact: Transportation Unit, Department of City Planning, (213) 473-3775 or (213) 473-3788.

Joanne Kerbavaz, Department of Parks and Recreation, Southern Service Center

8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270

San Diego CA 92108;

Office Phone 619-220-5300; Direct Phone 619-220-5357; FAX No. 619-298-6241

Welcome New Members

Roy & Val Tool Grinding, Inc.; Jeane Haining; Jeff Johnston; Karen Morgan

Welcome AGAIN to Renewing Members

Conrad Kaiser; Michele & David DeGaetano; Lon & Andrea DeYoung; Milt & Marge Feinberg; Charles & Mildred Downer; Carl Wilkening; Darold Farr; Eric Carter; Laura Woolley Smith; Bruce Oglesby; Sondra Cohen; Doris Shettleroe

WHY WE NEED YOUR INVOLVEMENT!

Excerpt from: *Equestrians Bridle at Builder's Impact on Trails*

(Los Angeles Times, April 28, 1997) by Martha L. Willman, Times Staff Writer

CHATSWORTH - Ever since hundreds of postage stamp-size lots were drawn onto subdivision maps 70 years ago, residents of the quaint Twin Lakes Park and Deerlake Highlands communities in the craggy hills north of Chatsworth have dreaded development but feared it was inevitable.

The more than 200 acres of rugged property at the north end of Canoga Avenue have served for decades as the playground of equestrians, hikers, and mountain bikers. The number of visitors has grown steadily as housing tracts pushed to the foot of the Santa Susana Mountains, gobbling up orange groves and ranches and boosting the Valley's million-plus population.

Now, miles of city-maintained trails in tract developments lead to the pristine area, which offers a year-round creek, shady canyons, and ridges that afford breathtaking, panoramic views. Fires, drought, property devaluations, and a stagnant housing market have kept the builders at bay. Until now.

A developer who recently purchased a large chunk of the area has told residents he plans to build an equestrian-friendly community there. Then this month, much to the consternation of trail users, chain barricades were raised across half a dozen trails, and an electric gate soon will block the only road up the mountain. The action has triggered an outcry among equestrians and others, who accuse the developer of renegeing on a promise. And, just weeks after they were installed, chains and signs already have been vandalized and ripped out.

"This whole thing is really getting out of hand," said Lynn Leonard, president of a local equestrian group. "It is just escalating beyond belief."

Consultants who work with the developer, Doug Riley of Bell Canyon, said he is out of the country and could not be reached for comment. But they said preliminary plans indicate that between 60 and 100 homes may be built in the area. Los Angeles County real estate records show that the project - called Chatsworth Ridge Estates - already is funded with a \$2 million construction loan.

SSMPA Executive Board

Doreen Rusen, President (818-360-0894); Albert Knight, Vice President (818-252-3466); Theodore Dent, Secretary (818-882-4664); Susan Gerke, Treasurer (818-704-9304); Janice Hinkston, Founder (818-884-9610); Members-at-Large: Pauline Aue; (818-341-5872); Barbara Coffman (818-347-5603); Judy Garris (818-340-0469); Jeff Johnston (805-522-8662); Lindsay Wilhelm (818-348-9682)

Invitation to Explore - Saturday, May 24, 1997

In this series of monthly hikes, Judy Garris and Rosemarie White and all interested hikers will explore the beautiful, lush canyons of the Santa Susana Mountains. We will visit the narrow wildlife corridors that connect the Santa Susanas to the Santa Monica Mountains and explore the trails to the Rim of the Valley. This month, we will hike along a stream under the cool, shady trees of Mormon Canyon. For the hikers who braved the narrow paths of poison oak on our March hike, this canyon will be fun. It has wide paths and very little poison oak. Bring lunch, water, and sturdy shoes. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Chatsworth Park South, in the rear parking lot, or at 9:30 a.m. under the 118 Freeway at Desoto Avenue for carpooling to the trailhead. Call 818-340-0469 for more information.

SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS PROJECT OPTIONS FOR CLASSIFICATION AND NAMING

CLASSIFICATION

There are two clear possibilities for classification of the Santa Susana Mountains Project: State Park and State Historic Park. Within either type of park unit, there would be the potential for further recognition of natural preserves or cultural preserves. The following sections of the Public Resources Code provide the official guidance for classification.

State Park

Public Resources Code Section 5019.53. State parks consist of relatively spacious areas of outstanding scenic or natural character, oftentimes also containing significant historical, archeological, ecological, geological, or other such values. The purpose of state parks shall be to preserve outstanding natural, scenic, and cultural values, indigenous aquatic and terrestrial fauna and flora, and the most significant examples of ...ecological regions...

Each state park shall be managed as a composite whole in order to restore, protect, and maintain its native environmental complexes to the extent compatible with the primary purpose for which the park was established.

Improvements undertaken within state parks shall be for the purpose of making the areas available for public enjoyment and education in a manner consistent with future generations. Improvements may be undertaken to provide for recreational activities including, but not limited to , camping, picnicking, sightseeing, nature study, hiking, and horseback riding, so long as such improvements involve no major modification of lands, forests, or waters, Improvements which do not directly enhance the public's enjoyment of the natural, scenic, cultural, or ecological values of the resource, which are attractions in themselves, or which are otherwise available to the public within a reasonable distance outside the park, shall not be undertaken within state parks.

State Historic Park

Public Resources Code Section 5019.59. Historical units, to be named appropriately and individually, consist of areas established primarily to preserve objects of historical, archaeological, and scientific interest, and archaeological sites and places commemorating important persons or historic events. Such areas should be of sufficient size, where possible, to encompass a significant proportion of the landscape associated with the historical objects, The only facilities that may be provided are those required for the safety, comfort, and enjoyment of the visitors, such as access, parking, water, sanitation, interpretation, and picnicking. Upon approval by the commission, lands outside the primary historic zone may be selected or acquired, developed, or operated to provide camping facilities within appropriate historical units. Upon approval by the State Park and Recreation Commission, an area outside the primary historic zone may be designated as a recreation zone to provide limited recreational opportunities that will supplement the public's enjoyment of the unit. Certain agricultural, mercantile, or other commercial activities may be permitted if those activities are a part of the history of the individual unit and any developments retain or

restore historical authenticity. Historical units shall be named to perpetuate the primary historical theme of the individual units.

Cultural Preserve

Public Resources Code Section 5019.74. Cultural preserves consist of distinct areas of outstanding cultural interest established within the boundaries of other state park system units for the purpose of protecting such features as sites, buildings, or zones which represent significant places or events in the flow of human experience in California. Areas set aside as cultural preserves shall be large enough to provide for the effective protection of the prime cultural resources from potential damaging influences, and to permit the effective management and interpretation of the resources. Within cultural preserves, complete integrity of the cultural resources shall be sought, and no structures or improvements which conflict with such integrity shall be permitted.

Recommended Classification: State Park

Advantages to State Park Classification

- Recognizes ecological, geological, and scenic values as well as historical and archaeological values
- More easily allows for expansion of unit outside of historic area; the current project could become part of a larger park unit
- More easily allows for appropriate recreation (e.g., sightseeing, nature study, hiking)
- Maintains protection for both natural and cultural resources

Advantages to State Historic Park Classification

- Specifically recognizes cultural values
- Places restrictions on development and use

NAMING

The current name for the area is the Santa Susana Mountains Project. The geographic reference to Santa Susana Mountains seems accepted and appropriate. Both citizen groups, the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association and the Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains, include this reference.

Recommended Name: "Santa Susana Mountains State Park"

Advantages to "Santa Susana Mountains State Park"

- Continues accepted geographical reference to area
- Would continue to be appropriate if additional lands are added to the park unit

Disadvantages to "Santa Susana Mountains State Park"

- Santa Susana Mountains extend to large area outside of park; some may desire more specific location
- Name may seem unwieldy to some

Phone List

California Parks & Recreation (general information) ----- 818-880-0350
 California Parks & Recreation EMERGENCY DISPATCH ---818-880-0365
 California State Parks Foundation ----- 415-258-9975
 Friends of California Parks (Laura Svendsgaard) ----- 800-300-7501
 Los Angeles City Councilman Hal Bernson (NR. office) ---- 818-886-5210
 Los Angeles City Park Headquarters (general information) --- 213-665-5188
 Los Angeles City Park Headquarters (Ranger dispatch) ----- 213-913-4147
 Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (S.F.V.) ----- 818-885-1032
 Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (San Clarita) ----- 805-254-2111
 Governor Pete Wilson ----- 213-897-0322
 State Senator Cathie Wright ----- 800-458-8500
 State Assemblyman Tom McClintock ----- 818-368-3838
 Frank M. Buda, Attorney At Law----- 818-999-9871
 William S. Abbey, Deputy Attorney Gen'l., State of CA ----- 213-897-2604
 Southern California Edison (general information) ----- 800-655-4555

SSMPA Facts & Figures

Number of years the City of Santa Clarita has been incorporated:

10

Since incorporation, money spent on parks, recreation facilities, and other infrastructure:

\$110,000,000

Number of the 21 missions in Alta California never to be abandoned:

1 (Santa Barbara)

Maps Available

For a map of the Rim of the Valley and public parkland, call the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy at 310-589-3200.

Address List

Donald W. Murphy, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation; Box 942896; Sacramento CA 94296-0001
 Governor Pete Wilson, State Capitol, Sacramento CA 95814
 Senator Cathie Wright (or your Senator), State Senate, Sacramento CA 95814
 Assembly Tom McClintock (or your assemblyperson), State Assembly, Sacramento, CA 95814

SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAIN PARK ASSOCIATION

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN, REJOIN, RENEW

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. Please mail checks payable to SSMPA. and mail 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: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

SPECIAL INTEREST/EXPERTISE: _____

CALENDAR**MAY****1997**

May 4 - (Sunday) Archaeology Hike with Al Knight & Barbara Coffman; (SR118 or 101 -Topanga Cyn. - Devonshire, go west, meet at Chatsworth Park South Rec. Ctr. - 9:00 a.m.

May 5 (Monday) General Membership Meeting (see article on page one)

May 11 (Sunday) Hike with Judy Garris; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.

May 18 (Sunday) Hike with Lindsay Wilhelm; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.

May 19 (Monday) Exec. Board Meeting - Glendale Federal Bank - 7:00 p.m.

May 25 (Sunday) Hike with Lee Baum; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.

Letter to the Membership from Doreen Ruson, President

Theodore Dent - a life member of the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association since 1971. A valued member of the Board, Ted wears many hats - outstanding Recording Secretary, also, has picked up the additional responsibility of Corresponding Secretary -out of necessity -- and -- is the Editor/ Publisher/ of the monthly Newsletter. The time required to fulfill all that is necessary to do these jobs (particularly as well as Ted does them) is mind-boggling. We thank and recognize Ted Dent for his many talented contributions.

**Next General Membership Meetings:
(Mondays at 7:00 p.m., except holidays and summer)**

June 2, 1997 (1st Monday); (No meeting in July or August); September 8, 1997 (2nd Monday - Happy Labor Day)

Come to our Meetings and Bring a Friend!

One nice day in March '97, Susan Gerke and Judy Garris walked the property that lies north of Stoney Point and south of 118 Freeway. We entered the property at the corner where Topanga Canyon Boulevard meets the 118, first stopping to look at a deer footprint in the fine dirt under the freeway, and commencing through the opening in the fence to Mayan Creek. The creek was filled with dense undergrowth, making the bottom of the ravine invisible to us, and we walked along the side of it as the animals might do at night. We remarked to each other about the beauty of the place, it's riparian nature and the configuration of the rocks that are especially pleasing to the eye. The ground was almost solid with small green growth. In one area, part of the land had evidently been cleared a season or so ago. Continuing on to Grant Street, we looked down on the "C.H.A. School", then walked to the fence at the street, near the underpass. A nearby resident told us the chain link fence was constructed recently to prevent people from coming on and dumping trash on the property. He said horseriders are allowed to open the padlock and travel through the property. We asked him about the beehives we saw were told they are kept by some Korean individuals.

As we walked back the way we came, we paused to listen to a canyon wren, and were fortunate to observe him enjoying his stay on a rock for some time.

(The preceeding was written by Susan Gerke after being told it was just for future historians. Susan, it's all good!)

Fdn. for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mtns.

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Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831

Non-Profit Organization

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