



Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

Volume 30, Issue 27

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

May 2003 Newsletter

Thank you, Laurie Dager, President of the Chatsworth Women's Club, for stepping forward and taking action to initiate funding for our Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. Laurie and Lillian Schepler attended our general membership meeting on April 21st and gave attendees pre-labeled blank postcards so that we could easily write out our requests to state representatives and park officials and mail them off! We thought this was such a good idea that we are providing the same service to you!

Members of SSMPA: Enclosed with this newsletter are 2 labeled and stamped postcards for you to fill in, sign (please include your address) and drop in your outgoing mailbox. Here are samples of

what to write:

- "Proposition 40 was passed and Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park has been dedicated since 1998. Please help us get improvements to the park, i.e., a visitors' center, ranger and marked trails."
- "Please support additional land acquisitions for the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park."
- "Please support improvements (a visitor's center, marked trails and a ranger) for the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park, in addition to expansion opportunities."
- "Become a champion of the environment! Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park has been dedicated since 1998. It is now 2003 and time for improvements, i.e., a state ranger, a visitor center and marked trails. Please help."
- "We want you to appreciate our landscape and mountains. Please help us improve Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. A ranger is needed, along with park improvements and land acquisitions for expansion."
- "Those of us who live in the Northwest San Fernando Valley would like to use the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park, but it does not have the improvements we need. Please help us get a state ranger and a visitor center for the park."

Laurie, Lillian, and other members of the Chatsworth Women's Club, your work for the park is appreciated. Good job! ❧



Butterfly Mariposa Lily

Calochortus venustus Dougl. ex Benth.
Lily Family. LILIACEAE

This is a spectacularly variable species. Many of them have cream to lavender flowers with blotches on the petals that are equally diverse. The flowers have been found colored dark maroon and even pale yellow, striped, spotted or with no markings at all. It is impossible to rely on color for identification. More reliable characteristics are the indented spots on the petals which are large, square and covered with hairs, combined with sepals which are curled back from the tip.

Butterfly Mariposa is found in sandy soil on rocky slopes in the western part of the range blooming from May to July.

All of the species of *Calochortus* can be cultivated for garden use but germination is slow and uncertain and blossoming unpredictable.

Butterfly as a common name for this flower undoubtedly arose from the colorful markings often seen on the petals.

Venustus means "charming." Every flower in this genus is that and none more so than this one.

[Text by Nancy Dale from the book *Flowering Plants, The Santa Monica Mountains Coastal & Chaparral Regions of Southern California.*]

[The beautiful photograph was shot in the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park by Teena Takata.]

Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park (SSPSHP) Update

submitted by Dorian Keyser

Thanks to the efforts of the Santa Susana Mtn. Park Assn. (SSMPA), the Fdn. for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mtns., the Santa Monica Mtns. Conservancy, the Angeles Dist. of the CA State Parks, and the Chatsworth Historical Society, we now have the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. This park's approved Interim Management Plan shows that it abuts the 105-acre Chatsworth Park South and that the acquisition of 5 acres will connect it to the 205-acre Corriganville Park.

SSPSHP is a rural park with native American rock art and bedrock mortars, plus the remains of quarries and cisterns, the foundation of the Stagecoach Inn, and the Devil's Slide of the Stagecoach Trail. It has extensive seasonal wildflowers, including rare red monkey flowers, numerous native shrubs and trees, plus olive trees. Residents include coyotes, raccoons, bobcats, opossums, rabbits, an occasional mountain lion, snakes, and many species of birds.

A key need for this park is the acquisition of sufficient land to connect to the Santa Susana Pass Road and a building for a visitors center and as a residence for a ranger.

We suggest that the rural nature of the SSPSHP and its location within 35 miles from the Angeles District's Las Virgenes Road headquarters recommend that it remain a part of the Angeles District rather than become part of the other half of the Southern District, whose headquarters will be more than 60 miles away and will be primarily made up of inner city parks.

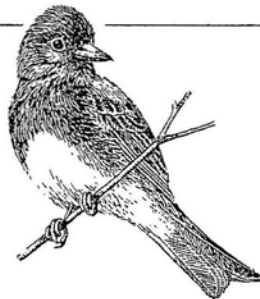
Status of Deerlake Ranch, the 159-Condominium Project, the 137 Lots North of Deerlake Ranch, and the Extension of Sesnon Blvd.

submitted by Dorian Keyser

Summary: Development of Deerlake Ranch with 386 houses, allowing only 30 single family houses and no condos, and recognizing that there will be no development in the 137 lots will result in 1,248 round trips per day, not the 6,000 to 10,000 as stated in a local organization's flyer.

Extending Sesnon from Balboa Blvd. to Browns Canyon Rd. and making it and Browns Canyon Rd. 4 lanes would result in additional traffic on the 118 Freeway west of DeSoto and in Chatsworth. It would also open up much land in the Santa Susana Mtns. for development. Using Mason St., instead of Browns Canyon Rd., would be less intrusive.

- Deerlake Ranch: The developer claims that he has valid entitlements for 484 single family houses but has officially proposed 438. However, he has submitted a completely rewritten proposal to the LA County Planning Commission for 386 single-family houses. Assuming 3 round trips per day for each house, this will result in 1,158 round trips per day.
- 159 Condos: Each would house one family and have a total of 3 round trips per family. However, at the March 19 hearing by the LA County Planning Commission, the developer was told that this location is suitable for up to 30 single-family houses and no condos. Assuming 3 round trips per house, this would result in 90 round trips per day instead of 430 round trips per day for 159 condos.
- 137 homes north of Deerlake Ranch: There is no access to these lots through Deerlake Ranch. Hence, access would have to be via the Santa Monica Mtns. Conservancy-owned 424 acres to Browns Canyon. Assuming that this access would be granted, which I doubt, the owners would have to fund the access road, grading the tract, building streets in it, and bringing in water and power service, sewers or septic tanks, telephone service. I seriously doubt that anything will be built. Note that LA County may own some of the lots as the result of non-payment of property taxes.
- LA City planning documents show that Sesnon Blvd. will eventually be extended from Balboa Blvd. to Browns Canyon Rd. and widened to 4 lanes. Presently, there is a 0.6 mile gap east of Porter Ranch and a 0.5 mile gap between Sesnon's western terminus and Browns Canyon Rd. Filling the eastern 0.6 mile gap would require the construction of an expensive bridge whereas making Mason St. Sesnon's western terminus would entail small cost and the cost of an additional 0.5 miles and widening Browns Canyon Rd. would be avoided. Note that a 4-lane secondary highway, including widening and paving Browns Canyon Rd., will result in much additional development in the Santa Susana Mountains.



Black Phoebe

Thank you for renewing your SSMPA membership: Michael McIntyre, Richard Bublitz, Maryanne & Henry Lonnie, John Einhorn & John Lyons, Karl Benink, Jim & Liz Carlin, Karl Benink, Shields family, Joanne Woodruff, Tom Siebert, Leon & Shirley Brown, Chuck & Pearl Turbush, Liliana Haro, Jim & Donna Swavely, Helen Murphy, Jeff & Grace Taylor, Ellen Pifer, and Nancy K. Schofield.

New Life Member: Janet Lazik.

Welcome new member: Michael Andre.

Would you like to serve on our Board? The time commitment is small, and the rewards are many. If you are interested in finding out more, call Jan Miller at (818) 702-0854.

*Santa Susana Mountain Park Association
Board of Directors 2003*

<i>President</i> Jan Miller	<i>Vice President</i> Dorian Keyser
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<i>Member at Large</i> Sandra Johnson	<i>Member at Large</i> OPEN
<i>Member at Large</i> OPEN	<i>Member at Large</i> OPEN

Although SSMPA is not endorsing either Julie Korenstein or Greig Smith, candidates for the LA City Council 12th District seat in the runoff election on May 20th, we decided to offer both candidates an opportunity to express themselves regarding issues that are crucial to this organization and the residents and visitors to our wonderful natural lands and mountains. We asked the same questions to both candidates, setting a deadline for the answers and a limit to the length of the answers. The candidates were told that their responses would be published in our May newsletter word for word. By publication time and after follow-up phone calls, we had received only one response. Here are our questions, followed by the answers we received from Ms. Korenstein.

QUESTIONS POSED BY SSMPA TO LA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 12 SEAT CANDIDATES JULIE KORENSTEIN AND GREIG SMITH:

1. **Open Space.** Explain what you would do to increase the sensitivity of the City Planning Dept. to the public's wishes and needs for use of open space.
2. **Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park Funding.** Explain how you would influence decision makers in State agencies to support expansion and funding for this significant regional park that is enjoyed by the community.
3. **Ridgeline Protection.** Explain your ideas for amending, creating anew, or improving the current language in the L.A.M.C. regarding "ridgeline protection." We'd like to know whether you think protection should only apply to top ridgelines or should apply to intermediate ridgelines as well? As evidenced by the Porter Ranch developments, the current language in the L.A.M.C. has proven to be ineffective.
4. **Quimby Funds.** Do you have any ideas or proposals for the use of Quimby funds in the 12th District?
5. **Site Preservation.** Explain what actions you would take to foster preservation of Indian sacred sites and historical western vistas of the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills.
6. **Sesnon Blvd.** What is your opinion on the following issue: Original plans for Sesnon Blvd. right-of-way in Porter Ranch included making Sesnon a four-lane highway between Browns Canyon and Balboa Blvd. Another proposal was to connect Sesnon all the way over to Brown's Canyon, including the "Sesnon bridge" east of Porter Ranch. Land north of Porter Ranch could be developed more easily with this type of improved access.
7. **Stein Project.** The reversal of a recent land use decision to approve the Stein project with RE-11 lots in northwest Chatsworth was appealed by a citizen group to the court system. Would you make it a priority to reverse the decision? If so, how would you accomplish this? If not, why not?
8. **Protection of Community Plan.** Explain your views about the recent amendment to the Community plan intended to remove the section north of Devonshire Street and west of DeSoto as dedicated horsekeeping areas.
9. **Campaign Funds.** Regarding nos. 7 and 8 above, explain how you would represent the community in matters where substantial donors to your campaign seek to develop rural lands and to change the rural way of life envisioned in the Community Plan.
10. **Eagles Nest and Tone Yee Properties.** What might you do to promote the acquisition by an agency of land preservation of the Eagles Nest and Tone Yee properties? These parcels of open space are identified as essential to the wildlife corridor between the Chatsworth Nature Preserve and the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park to the north. (See the Interim Management Plan of the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park and documents prepared by Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.)
11. **Chatsworth Nature Preserve.** Explain your views about the future of the Chatsworth Nature Preserve, which presently has no development, no sports use, and very limited public access under present DWP management.
12. **Equestrian Rights.** Do you believe equestrian uses should be retained in Chatsworth? If so, why? If not, why?
13. **Sunshine Canyon Landfill.** The BFI landfill is of great concern to many, particularly to those who contend that it is much too close to DWP and Metropolitan Water District reservoirs and that it is located near active earthquake faults. Explain whether you have received any campaign funds from BFI, its management personnel, its attorneys, consultants, or lobbyists and in what way such donations might influence your decisions regarding the operation of the dump.
14. **Neighborhood Councils.** How will you incorporate, as well as actively solicit, input from the local Neighborhood Council? What weight will you give its recommendations in the operation of your office?
15. **Citizens Advisory Committee.** This committee historically learns about proposed development projects long before the members of the community who are most affected. These members of the community who live near a proposed project, have little, if any, representation on the CACs. We are concerned that CACs tend to see the project primarily from the developer's point of view. Explain how you think this process could be improved.
16. **Rim of the Valley.** Do you have any ideas or specific proposals for the acquisition of land for the Rim of the Valley trail?

RESPONSES OF CANDIDATE JULIE KORENSTEIN:

1. Open space and land use issues are among my top priorities. For far too long, city policies have been dictated in deals made behind closed doors between City Council and developers. As a result, the General Plan recognizes that the City is severely deficient in providing the required ration of parks and open space to population that is required. The City Planners meet consistently with the proponents of projects, but never with the public. There must be early public hearings. Although I think the proponent should pay for the EIRs, they should not be allowed to choose the company that prepares it.
2. I wholeheartedly support the preservation and expansion of this historic area. Unfortunately the state currently seems not to be in a mood to part with funds, and our representatives have not led the charge on environmental issues. We might try getting funds from the bond issues, through the County, for new adjoining acquisitions, and several of our congressional legislators seem interested in providing funding for open space acquisition.
3. The current language has been ineffective because of the developers who have access to the planning commissioners. Developers are eager to build on hillsides and ridgelines. The code section that deal with this needs to be changed to offer protection to hillsides and not only the goat trails currently protected under the code.
4. Although the Quimby funds were originally to be used exclusively for parks, throughout the years they seem to have been spent or absorbed in other areas, such as theaters and concession stands. For the 12th District, I think these funds should be used to buy land that has been vacated and then the area should be converted to park sites to protect them from future developments. Precise state law regulates the Quimby funds. I would make sure they are collected, accounted for and used within five miles of the development site.
5. I am deeply saddened to see new homes being built amid the dramatic rock formations and vistas in the west valley. I will investigate how we can stop this practice and offer protection to these irreplaceable areas. I will be most receptive to your suggestions.
6. Porter Ranch is already over developed, and I am greatly concerned about turning Sesnon into a four-lane highway, which will have a major impact on Brown's Canyon and increased traffic. Balboa Boulevard is already suffering the effects of over development in Santa Clarita with no infrastructure and I do not think that diverting the traffic through a residential neighborhood will relieve the congestion. It would just open the door for more development in the Santa Susana Mountains.
7. Yes. The equestrian community and other community groups have been extremely opposed to this project, and unfortunately the Planning Department voted to allow it. Councilman Bernson fervently supported the plan change that appears to favor only one developer/campaign contributor. The trial court's decision favored the citizens' group, CLPA. Councilman Bernson convinced the city of Los Angeles and the City Attorney to appeal. My first day in Council, I will make a motion to reopen this case, study the facts presented in the community's testimony and research avenues to reverse the plan change as soon as possible.
8. I am vehemently opposed to the recent amendment to change the Chatsworth Community Plan. In order to ensure community plans are thoughtfully crafted, we must have advice from people who live, work and care about the community. There needs to be changes to the Planning Commission appointees. We need people on the Commission that better reflect what the community wants.
9. I believe that because my opponent has received substantial contributions from developers, he will be beholden to them. I, on the other hand, have not accepted money from developers; therefore I will not be influenced by special interests.
10. It is extremely important to preserve our wildlife corridors. Because of the aggressive development of Council District 12, we are quickly losing our open space. It may be possible to use Quimby funds to acquire the land. I will also lobby our State representatives for available funding.
11. I would make a sincere effort to convince the DWP to relinquish title to the city of Los Angeles for better control. I feel strongly that the Chatsworth Nature Preserve be protected and no commercial use or residential development should ever occur there. I do believe there should be carefully managed and guided educational tours of the area to help teach the public the appreciation of the natural flora and wildlife in the basin.
12. Absolutely. People have historically moved to Chatsworth to raise horses and it has always been known as a horse keeping area. It must be preserved to protect that heritage and the equestrian rights, and I will do everything in my power to make that happen.
13. The expansion of Sunshine Canyon dump is a major environmental problem, considering its proximity to the drinking water for 17 million California residents. I am concerned about the health risks to the families, children and our community due to the contamination of the ground water and air quality. I have never taken money from anyone associated with BFI.
14. Every land use issue will go through the local Neighborhood Council. I will have a representative from my office attend all neighborhood council meetings, and I will meet regularly with representatives of all of the 12th District Neighborhood Councils. I will make sure all Neighborhood Councils are aware of the land use issues early, and I will have received their advice before any decisions are made.
15. The Citizens Advisory Committees as they currently stand should be abolished, and Neighborhood Councils should take their place. This is what the Charter requires and I will make sure that all community members are heard.
16. I believe that the Conservancy and certain local representatives to Congress will support funding to make Marge Feinberg's Rim of the Valley dream come true. I will work with them to secure land and funding whenever and wherever possible.

UPCOMING HIKES

● Sierra Club Hikes:

Sat. 5/17: Santa Susana Mtns: East Cyn, Santa Clarita Woodlands. 5 mi RT, 700' gain. Easy-paced hike to see wildflowers. Meet 9 am in parking lot on R (take I-5, exit Calgrove, L to The Old Road, 1-1/2 mi to E Cyn. trailhead). Bring binoculars, flower guides, water, snack. Ldr: Judy Garris. Co-Ldrs: Bob Galletly, Joanne Proffit.

Thu. 6/12: Chatsworth Park Hike: Hike into Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. Mod. 6-7 mi, 800' gain loop up the Stagecoach Trail. Meet 8:30 am. in parking lot. From Topanga Cyn Blvd, turn W on Devonshire and drive into Chatsworth Pk S to 2nd parking lot by the Rec Bldg. Ldr: Bob Galletly. Asst: Joanne Proffit.

● Sierra Club/Santa Susana Task Force Hike:

Sun. 5/18: 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. Stop at SSMPA's Nature Center after hike to see displays. Leader: Lee Baum; Asst. Leaders: Judy Garris & Bob Galletly. (See directions above.) Call (818) 341-1850 or (818) 346-7654 for info.

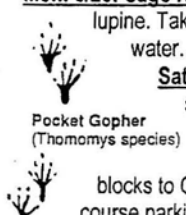
● Santa Monica Mtns Conservancy / Mtns Rec. & Cons. Authority/Rim of the Valley Hikes:

Sat. 5/17: Towsley Cyn. Park: Morning Bird Walk: 8 to 10 am. Is there such a thing as a teenage bird? Bring binoculars. Traveling north through Santa Clarita, take Calgrove exit from I-5, turn W back under freeway and take Old Road S, proceed to 1st driveway on your R. Look for sign: "Ed Davis Pk. at Towsley Cyn." Park back lot; meet at kiosk.

Mon. 5/26: Sage Ranch - Spring Flowers: 2:30 to 5 pm. Mod. 3 mi. RT, 2-1/2 hr. hike. 100' elev. gain on old farm road. Identify monkey flowers, locoweed, bush lupine. Take Roscoe Blvd W to Valley Cir. Bl. R 1 mi to Woolsey Cyn Rd L to end of Woolsey, R 1/4 mi on Black Cyn Rd. Meet in parking area. Bring snack, water.

Sat. 5/31: Happy Camp & Beyond: Spring Wildflowers Hike: 9 am to 3:45 pm. Hike a moderate (8+ RT) up over 2000+ ft. (1300' gain/loss) to see panoramic view of Simi Valley & Moorpark out to the Channel Islands. Wear boots, bring lunch, binoculars & 2-3 qts. water per person.

Directions to 15100 Happy Camp Cyn. Rd., Moorpark: From 101 Fwy, take 23 Fwy N, connecting to go on 118 Fwy E; and from westbound 118 Fwy. Exit at Los Angeles Ave./Princeton Ave. (NOT New Los Angeles Ave.). Turn N on Princeton Ave. (Do not take LA Ave.) Go 2 blocks to Campus Pk. Dr. Turn L, past 2 more blocks and straight into park at Rustic Cyn Golf Course sign and gate. Follow paved road and park in golf course parking lot where docent will meet you (about 2 mi. from park entrance).



EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

● **Re-Enchanting the City #2: Urban Wildlife: How To Enjoy It and Protect It, LA Zoo, Sat, 5/17 - 9 am to 3 pm** Presenter: John Hadiddion, Director of Urban Wildlife for the Humane Society. Contact. Dr. Rosemarie White, (818) 769-1521; canadagooseproj@aol.com.

● **SSMPA Volunteer Opportunity:** Learn about nature and history and pass this knowledge on to others? We are looking for a few volunteers to staff our visitor's center in Chatsworth Park South one Sunday a month (12-2 pm) on a rotating basis. Contact Gretha Davis at (818) 340-4011.

● **From Outings Chair of Santa Susana Mountains Task Force, Judy Garris (818) 346-7654; nature@lafn.org:**

OPEN HOUSE FOR SIERRA CLUB MEMBERS!

The Santa Susana Mountains Task Force (SSMTF) is having an Open House for Sierra Club members at the SSMPA Visitor's Center in Chatsworth on **Wednesday, June 11th, at 7:30 p.m.** While you enjoy a slice of delicious hot apple pie ala mode (yum!) and coffee/tea/milk, you will receive a verbal update on the current, local open space and development issues including the west San Fernando Valley section of the Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor.

The Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills contain the primary wildlife corridor linking the Angeles and the Los Padres National Forests with the Santa Monica Mountains. SSMPA seeks to preserve the open space on the southern slopes of the Santa Susana Mountains.

This is also going to be a special re-organizing meeting. Your membership and your participation are most welcome. To continue our standing with the Sierra Club, a membership of five SSMTF members must be maintained. (This is a vital group to keep going for our local area.) Please join us!

Directions: Take Devonshire St. west, to the end, and enter Chatsworth Park South. The parking lot is at the far end, next to the Recreation Bldg. The Visitors Center is located up the steps at the southwest corner of the building.

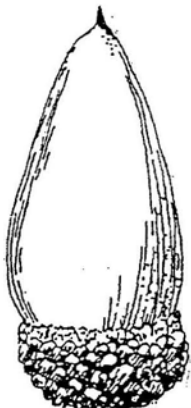
To RSVP, call Judy at (818) 346-7654.

● IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO RSVP FOR THE BBQ DINNER AT THE COWBOY PALACE SALOON!

Sat., May 31. Great food & line dancing lessons, all for \$10! A percentage of the evening take goes to save our natural areas. Call Gretha Davis, (818) 340-4011.

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)

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