

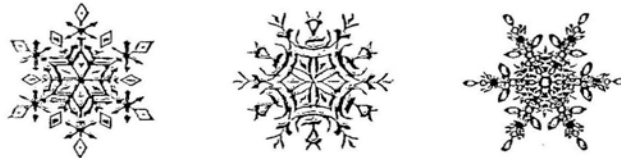


Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

Volume 30, Issue 24

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

December 2002 / January 2003



*We warmly extend our best wishes to all of you for a joyous Holiday and peace-filled New Year.
Board of Directors, Santa Susana Mountain Park Assn.*

Project Park Support

Steve Bylin, Supervising Park Ranger at Topanga State Park, Angeles District of California State Parks, enthusiastically accepted our invitation to speak and answer questions at SSMPA's general meeting on November 18th. The high points of the interchange are being shared with you here.

Steve began by commending SSMPA for acquiring the land for the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park (established January 27, 1998), whose boundaries are from Chatsworth Park South to Lilac Lane on the west and the 118 Freeway on the north, acknowledging that it was "quite an accomplishment". Now our work continues in the challenging endeavor to get funding for the park.

Q: How many acres is our Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park?

A: 670, so far.

Q: Who is in charge of it?

A: Hayden Sohm is currently acting superintendent for State Parks.

Q: Do rangers supervise the park?

A: Presently, 3 rangers are responsible for coming up here from Topanga State Park if a problem appears. But we come here routinely a couple times every week to see what is going on.

Q: Is this the only park in the Angeles District that isn't staffed?

A: There are pocket beaches that are not staffed, but there is no other park in the Angeles District that does not have rangers.

Q: I've heard about the Baldwin Hills Park. What happened there?

A: The Baldwin Hills project in LA started a few years ago on 50-60 acres and became a state park. It received

tremendous support. They already have 2 rangers there. The local homeowners association obtained the political support, which was the success mechanism. Whittier Park, only 3-4 acres, is being restored with millions of dollars because people there were very active.

Q: What kind of staffing is appropriate?

A: Ideally, our park should be staffed with 2 rangers and a maintenance person.

Q: Should we lobby state senators to get money up here? Not all of our elected representatives seem to favor acquiring parkland.

A: All state representatives have influence. Their constituents need to ask for what they want. Representatives for other So. Calif. districts have been successful in getting lots of money for parks in their area. Local groups formed coalitions and said, "We think these parks are important; we want our share of the funds here."

Q: The Santa Susana Mountains Task Force is currently trying to work with our State Park. Also, SSMPA was told

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we had to pay for the Interim Management Plan for the park, so the Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains and SSMPA split the cost. Now we feel our park has not been given any kind of priority, even though we got the Interim Management Plan into existence.

A: With the budget change proposals, you are dealing with statewide organizations that have local politicians pushing for their programs. The Angeles District has pushed through numerous proposals for the State Park here, but so far nothing has happened. A lot of effort went into acquiring this park; now the challenge is to get money to staff and improve it.

Q: Inner city parks get more money because they are more needy, right?

A: Other parks are dealing with more serious issues than this one, so this park is off the radar map.

Q: It seems that we need to request our legislators to work on getting Proposition 40 funds distributed to our area. I have been told that the Angeles District regards the Rockridge property as the number one preferred acquisition for the expansion of the park in part because it is located in Significant Ecological Area #21 (Santa Susana Pass). To whom do we need to direct comments and funding requests?

A: Your local representatives: assemblymen, state senators, county supervisor and city council members, because your state park is in the city of LA.

Q: Council meetings are held downtown, and it is important that the public show up at those meetings. It is our money; we need to insist on getting it. We need to work on all levels: local, County & State. Perhaps a lobbyist could help us in Sacramento.

A: These are your challenges.

Q: Can you give us a wish list for clean-up of the park?

A: Graffiti is #1. Pacific Palisades area has a graffiti-busters program made up of volunteers. You could do that here, and State Park can be your partner in this. We all can do a lot. The Eagle Scouts and other groups can go up and pick up trash, etc. People will get involved when invited.

Q: What needs to physically be done for our park?

A: One of the things I really want to do is have a trailhead at the entrance of Chatsworth Park South with a sign under

the City Park sign: "Gateway to the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park". I'd also like to have another trailhead at the place just past the basketball court under the oak trees and a kiosk for interpretation of history. Signs are needed at all the trailheads. Organizations such as SSMPA and the Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains could help with the cost of these items that are not prohibitively expensive. The Foundation has already provided us with money for some signs.

Q: What does it mean to "develop" the park?

A: Some feel there are too many trails that have been made, going all over the place in the park. One of the things we want to do is perfect and refine the trail system.

Q: Stoney Point has been saved. We need to acquire the land that would connect Corriganville with the park. If State Parks could buy that land, it would be great.

A: As far as funding for park expansion, only the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, a state agency, is allowed to wheel and deal.

There is a lot of support in Northern California for parks, so a lot of money goes there. I was in Monterey for a vacation. There is a large gift store run by a park association, which has 400 active people. We don't have that luxury here or in Topanga Canyon either. The money State Parks collects in fees goes back into state parks. When the self-regulator boxes for collecting park fees were removed last year from all state parks, fees were cut in half.

Q: The Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park is heavily used -- by hikers, nature groups, equestrians and school children. The Foundation held a docent program in the park that was very popular and made people aware of the fact that there is more history in these mountains here than any mountain range in California. This is a very special park.

A: You've got a great start and good community support. Keep up the good work!

[Editor's Note: What did I glean from tonight's meeting? Our wonderful Santa Susana State Historic Park will remain orphaned and lacking in budgetary support unless we build local grassroots support and persuade the politicians that their constituents demand that the state allocate money toward the maintenance and expansion of the park.]

From Outings Chair of the Santa Susana Mountains Task Force

Judy Garris (818) 346-7654; nature@lafn.org

Updated info under "Conservation" listings for the Sierra Club Schedule #292

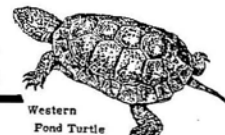
SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS TASK FORCE (SSMTF) (0491) supports the protection of the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills as the primary wildlife corridor linking the Angeles National Forest and the Los Padres National Forest to the Santa Monica Mountains. This narrow corridor is important for genetic mixing of wildlife between the adjoining mountains. Task force members work to preserve this unique land by attending meetings of government agencies and other groups and by submitting written comments. We feel it's extremely important to preserve our rapidly disappearing natural open spaces not only for the wildlife but also for future human generations to know, respect and enjoy. We train hike leaders in the land use issues, history and the natural science of the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills. New leaders receive an introductory booklet on the history and wildlife of the area.

We work with the Santa Susana Mountain Park Assn., (SSMPA), a group that is involved with both Los Angeles and Ventura County land issues. SSMPA publishes a newsletter with SSMTF hikes and meeting dates. SSMPA donates a hikers first aid kit to new leaders. Meetings are held five times a year at the Chatsworth Park South Nature Center at the west end of Devonshire Blvd. in Chatsworth. Call for times and dates.

The Chatsworth Park South Nature Center is open to visitors every third Sunday from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Judy Garris/CH/Out

Dorian Keyser/VC/Sec



Pioneer Day

This annual event, always beautifully done by the **Chatsworth Historical Society**, is a great opportunity for people to schmooze with others who are brought out by love of the Acre, Minnie Palmer's house, history, crafts, fabulous chili at the cookoff, and just plain greeting old friends and making new ones. On Oct. 6th, SSMPA and its sister organization, the **Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains (FPSSM)**, enthusiastically shared information with all who visited our tables about our local mountains and hills, history, our goals and mission, hikes, the stagecoach trail, etc. Many people who stopped were unaware of the work of the organizations and asked for more information. FPSSM's colorful information board drew lots of interest. It was a special treat to meet **Alan Goldsworthy**, whose contribution to SSMPA lives on, as he, as a high school student in the early 1970s, designed the mountain/horizon logo we continue to use on our letterhead and newsletters. Alan is now a successful graphics designer in San Francisco.

A special thanks to the **Chatsworth Historical Society** for allowing us space once again at this wonderful event.

FPSSM News

The **Foundation for the Santa Susana Mountains** outreached to the community on Nov. 9th with a fundraiser at **Casa de Carlos, 21300 Devonshire St., Chatsworth**. Attendees were greeted warmly at the door by Board members near an attractive information display showing the beauty of the Santa Susanas and Simi Hills. President Pearl Turbush talked briefly on the value of preserving our parkland, then all enjoyed a scrumptious Mexican buffet. FPSSM wishes to thank owner **Larry Ruiz**, owner of **Casa de Carlos**, for his support in making this fundraiser a success.

Conservancy Buys Woodland Parcel

The **Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy** has purchased a woodlands area that, while small in size, is large in importance as a watering hold for animals and a point for humans to enter a larger park nearby. The conservancy bought the land in November with revenue from a statewide bond measure passed in 2000. The cost was nearly equal to the property's market value. The **Oak Forest Canyon Park**, located in Sherman Oaks, connects to the 110-acre **Fossil Ridge Park**, an undeveloped natural area teeming with fossils.

Trails: Our Cultural and Historic Heritage

The **Santa Monica Mountains** contain historic trails originally made by the **Chumash Indians** and later expanded by the **Spaniards**. The **Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council** was born out of concern and need to preserve these historic trails. Through their commitment to the trails of the **Santa Monica Mountains** and in cooperation with many dedicated individuals and agencies, some of these historic trails now link local, state and federal parks, creating a vast recreational resource that extends from **Griffith Park** in LA to **Point Mugu** in Ventura County. The Trails Council coordinates with various government agencies in efforts toward development and preservation of the trail system; assists in negotiations with property owners regarding trail alignments; promotes public awareness, and builds and maintains trails.

Almost every Saturday except for July and August, trail maintenance is being carried out. The once-a-month Wednesday outings combine a hike and light trail maintenance. If interested, call (818) 222-4531; check out the website at www.smmtc.org.



Five adults and six children took gloves and garbage bags into the hills for a "pick-up party" behind Chatsworth Oaks Park on Nov. 9th and collected two pickup truck-loads of litter, leaving the site much better than before (see photo at left -- the graffiti will be addressed next).



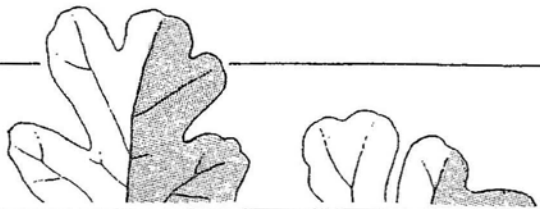
Chats. Historical Society's Pioneer Day - Oct. 6, 2002
Chuck Turbush, Treas., FPSSM, Pearl Turbush, Pres., FPSSM, Susan Gerke, SSMPA



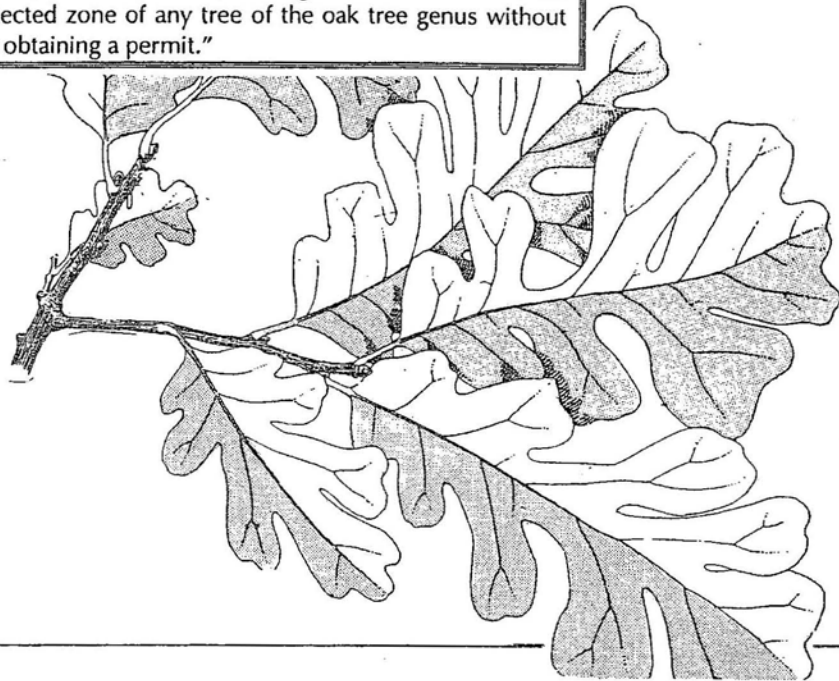
FPSSM Fundraiser - Nov. 9, 2002
Chuck Turbush, Treas., FPSSM, Larry Ruiz, Owner, Casa de Carlos,
Pearl Turbush, Pres., FPSSM



FPSSM Fundraiser - Reid Bogert, Susan Gerke, Patty Miller (SSMPA)



L.A. County's Oak Tree Ordinance, in effect since September 1998 in all unincorporated areas of the County, states: "A person shall not cut, destroy, remove, relocate, inflict, damage or encroach into the protected zone of any tree of the oak tree genus without first obtaining a permit."



**SSMPA General Membership Meeting:
Monday, January 20, 2003**

Our next general meeting will be held on Monday, January 20, 2003. (There will be no December meeting.) Our program will be announced that evening. We will share updates and have discussion on local issues. And, of course, Mary Gorman will bake her wonderful cookies for us. See you there.

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.

Thank you for renewing your SSMPA membership:

D. Gene Clark, Keith Larson, Sherwin & Marlene Lovett, Jan & Patty Miller, Anna Combs, Greg Jensen, Marillyn Holmes, Chris Lindelien and Anne W. Lee.

Welcome to our new members:

Bernie Leytus, Greig & Chris Smith, Kira Fuchs and Robert Redecker.

SSMPA Executive Board 2002-2003

Jan Miller, President	818-702-0854
Dorian Keyser, Vice President, Program Chair	818-345-3795
Diana Dixon-Davis, Treasurer	818-341-4242
Patty Miller, Recording Secretary	818-702-0854
Teena Takata, Member at Large	818-703-1040
Judy Garris, Member at Large	818-346-7654
Sandra Johnson, Member at Large	818-341-0341

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT / LA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN
PROJECT NO. 02-305**

The County of Los Angeles will be preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Comprehensive Update and Amendment to the Los Angeles County General Plan. Highlights of this proposed amendment include revisions to growth policies, expansion of Significant Ecological Areas, changes to the Highway Plan, revisions to land use policy maps, and expanded focus on watershed planning. The revised plan will focus on the unincorporated area of Los Angeles County.

Public Review: The Notice of Preparation (NOP) and the Initial Study prepared for the project are being circulated for a 30-day public review period, which ends December 23, 2002. Written comments will be received by the Dept. of Regional Planning until 5:00 p.m. on that date.

A copy of the NOP and Initial Study is available for public review at the Porter Ranch Public Library. The Initial Study may also be viewed on the Dept. of Regional Planning's website under "Public Review Documents" at: <http://planning.co.la.ca.us>.

All submitted inquiries and comments will be addressed in the EIR. Therefore, SSMPA encourages members to send letters regarding your concerns and what you believe should be addressed in the EIR. Send letters re: Project No. 02-305 to:

County of Los Angeles
Dept. of Regional Planning
Attn: Mark Herwick
320 W. Temple St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Fax: (213) 626-0434 (Attn: General Plan Amendment EIR)
Email: generalplan@planning.co.la.ca.us

For more information, contact Mark Herwick at the General Plan Development Section at (213) 974-6417.

UPCOMING HIKES & EVENTS

Sierra Club/Santa Susana Task Force Hike

Sun. 1/19 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 Judy Garris at (818) 346-7654 for further info.

Sierra Singles and the Endangered Species Task Force Hike

Sun. 12/22: Native American Blessing and Wildlife Walk: Wild birds wake up early! Meet at the Encino Reservoir, which is snuggled up against the Santa Monica Mtns, at 6:30 am to see the Canada geese fly out across the SFV and to be with wildlife expert and reservoir caretaker Jarron Lucas, a Shoshone Indian, in a Native American blessing ceremony for the new year. At 8 am, we will hike around the lake and along the base of the mountains. O-rated, 5 miles round trip. Call leader Rosemarie White at (818) 769-1521 for directions.

NOTE: On Tues., 1/21/03, 7:30 pm: Rosemarie White, president and founder of the Canada Goose Project, and its division, the Migration Foundation, will entertain with talks and slides of the Canada and Snow Geese, who fly thousands of miles to visit us each winter. Socializing and refreshments. Reseda Park Recreation Hall at 18411 Victory Blvd.

Wishtoyo Foundation

Sat. 12/21: Honoring the Winter Solstice with Mati Waiya. Time: from sunrise until noon, at the site of the Chumash Demonstration Village project, on the Nicholas Cyn County Beach in Malibu, between Zuma & Leo Carrillo Beach, near Malibu Tennis & Riding Club (west side of PCH). Open to everyone. Park in lot, follow steps on beach side of lot; walk on driveway to ceremonial circle, located south of parking lot.

Rancho Simi Trail Blazers Hikes

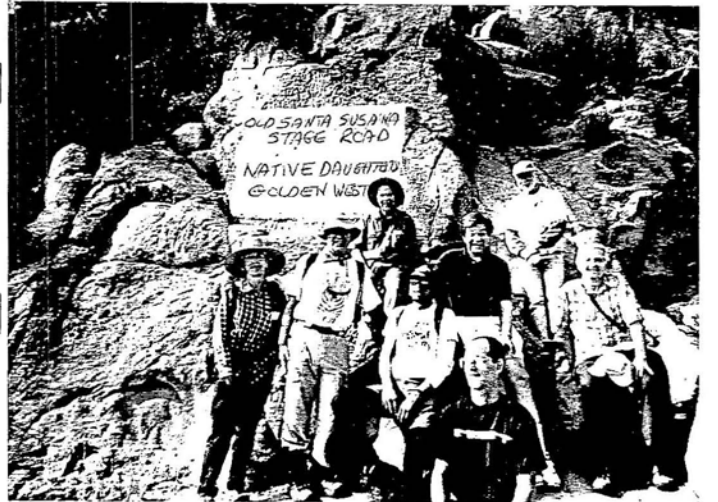
Sat. 12/28: Wildwood Park: Moderate 4-6 mi round trip. Meet 8 am near Donut Delite, corner Madera & Royal in Simi V. Bring water, snack, boots.

Sun. 12/29: Rocky Peak: Meet 4 pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd. off Santa Susana Pass Rd. Strenuous, 5 mi round trip.

For more information, call the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District at (805) 584-4400. <http://rstb.homestead.com>



Stagecoach Trail Hikers - Nov. 17 (photo by Reid Bogert)

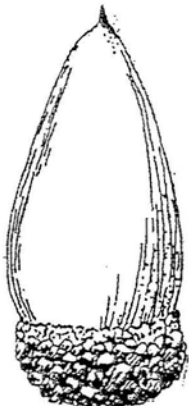


(photo by Susan Gerke)



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)
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Name: _____ Phone: _____
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 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, call Judy Garris at 818-346-7654.

 **Mark your calendar**  

SSMPA BOARD MEETINGS

@ Chatsworth Park South Visitors Center:

Monday, Jan. 6, 2003, 7:30 p.m.

Monday, Feb. 3, 2003, 7:30 p.m.


SSMPA PROGRAM MEETINGS

@ Rockpointe Clubhouse:

(no general meeting in December)

Monday, Jan. 20, 2003, 7:15 p.m.

About this newsletter: If you have comments or would like to submit an article or announcement for publication in this newsletter, write to SSMPA, c/o Susan Gerke, Newsletter Editor, P.O. Box 4831, Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831 or call (818) 704-9304.

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.



Santa Susana Mountain Park Association &
Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains
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