

# Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

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

## February 2006 Newsletter

### State Park Kick-Off Meeting

State Parks officials met with North Valley residents and organizations to publicly present the process to create the General Plan for the 8-year-old, 670-acre mountainous Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. Representatives of the Santa Susana Mountain Park Assn., Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains, Chatsworth Women's Club, Chatsworth Historical Society, Save Chatsworth, Inc., Twin Lakes Homeowners Assn., Corral 54 ETI, Chatsworth Neighborhood Council, Chatsworth Community Coordinating Council, Granada Hills Women's Club, and Rockpointe Homeowners Assn. The Chatsworth Park South Parks & Rec gym, where the meeting was held, would not have been large enough to hold the approximate 1,500 to 2,000 people who were represented by the above organizations! Representatives from Councilman Greig Smith's office and Representative Brad Sherman's office also attended the meeting.

Among those present for State Parks were Angeles District Superintendent Ron Schafer, Suzanne Goode, State Park Ecologist, Craig Sap, Superintendent LA Sector, and Barney Matsumoto, CA Parks & Recreation, who conducted most of the meeting. He and his team of planners described a plan to design the historical, cultural, interpretive and landscape-architecture elements of the park. They are looking for the best ways to communicate the value of the park's resources to the public. Among the improvements under consideration are a visitor's center, a ranger and support staff, clearing and marking of historic sites and an improved trail system.

The approximately 18-month-long process will include development of a draft, then a final, environmental impact report. Public input will be a significant factor in how to manage and present the park's resources. According to Ron Schafer, the process begins with initial planning, then holding several public meetings, then an environmental review process, resulting in a general plan that will go to the State Parks and Recreation Commission (who originally classified it as a state park). With the general plan in place, the real work of planning a state park will begin. "It's a long process," said Shafer, "and we still need to raise the 10 or 15 million dollars to build the park."

For more information about the park and the process toward the general plan, visit: [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov).

#### General Membership Meeting - Monday, February 20, 2005

SSMPA Lifetime Member **Al Knight** will discuss his most recent archaeological escapades and working on the National Register recorded *Old Ridge Route*, at the *Zanja Madre* adjacent to LA State Historic Park (the "Corn Fields"), on the MTA Gold Line in *Boyle Heights*, at an ancient Millingstone site in *Azusa* and especially in the *Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park* and *Stonehurst* (in upper Sun Valley). Al will also present a slide show and with a brief talk on the Native American rock art of Southern California.

Al is currently the Senior Monitor and Field Supervisor for COGSTONE Resource Management, a private company that works with public and private clients to assist them in archaeological, historical and paleontological project compliance- research, planning, field studies, field work, analysis, report writing, follow-up, etc. See *an informative letter from Al on the following page.*

SSMPA General Membership Program meetings take place every 3rd Monday September through November and January through May at the Rockpointe Clubhouse, 22300 Devonshire, Chatsworth, on the south side, 1 block before entering Chatsworth Park South. Our program meetings begin at 7:15 p.m. and conclude at 9:00 p.m.



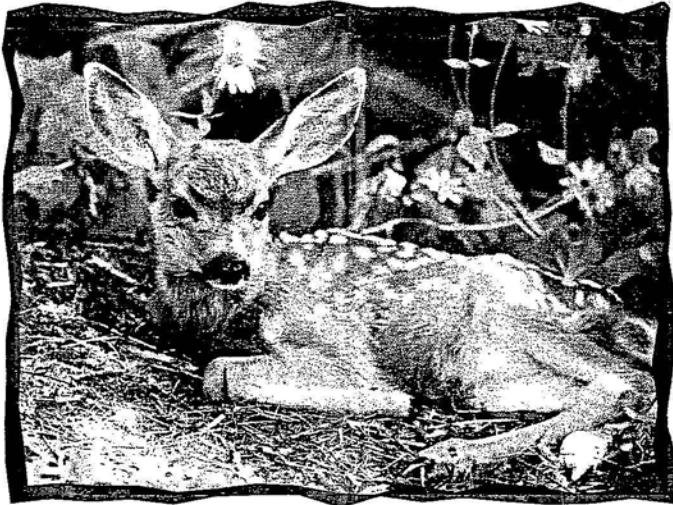
A big thank you to Laurie Dager, members of the Chatsworth Women's Club, and everyone else who signed petitions and, sent in postcards and letters of support. By keeping the campaign alive, the process toward park improvement and enhancement has now begun!

**YOU can be a part of the planning process. Email your preferences, concerns and opinions regarding the park to Barney Matsumoto at [bmatsum@parks.ca.gov](mailto:bmatsum@parks.ca.gov) or send them to: California State Parks, Southern Service Center, 8885 Rio San Diego Dr., #270, San Diego, CA 92108; ATTN: Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park General Plan Team.**

## Urban Wonders

Seemingly oblivious to the looky-loos and weekday commuters, 3 adult mule deer have recently been observed grazing under the oaks 30-100 yards inside the fence of the west end of the Chatsworth Nature Preserve. It's a treat to see them peacefully feeding in the safety of the preserve. Some people pull off the road to enjoy this unusual sight in the city, and the deer don't seem to mind.

Several SSMPA members who participate in Canada Goose Project weekly goose counts in the Chatsworth Nature Preserve report that so far this winter, the number of Canada geese have varied on a given day anywhere from 0 to 417 (on Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>). The geese are counted at dawn and dusk on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and the weekends. The count will end in March, when the geese fly north for the warmer months.



Mule Deer Fawn

## Northridge Civic Association Honors SSMPA

SSMPA Board members received an unexpected and delightful visit at our meeting on Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup>. Marilyn Stout, former Treasurer of the Northridge Civic Association, stopped by to announce that their association disbanded (retired) and decided to donate the amount of \$230.81, the remains of their treasury, to SSMPA in order to further our work.

The Northridge Civic Association should be proud of their many accomplishments over the years to the community.

Our sincere gratitude goes to Andy Anderson, former President of Northridge Civic Assn., Marilyn Stout, former Treasurer, and former board member Glenn Bailey.

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.

## Invasives Study

Federal agencies spend about \$1 billion a year on the management of invasive species, according to a federal report issued in 2005. The report, from the Government Accountability Office, calls the spread of invasive species "an explosion in slow motion" with weeds now covering an estimated 133 million acres nationwide.

There are no overall federal controls for invasive weeds. States are left on their own to classify and deal with such plants, and there is little uniformity in the regulations. California lists 236 plants as noxious.

Dear Editor:

I recently read my March 2002 SSMPA newsletter, and especially enjoyed re-reading "Reflections of Jan Hinkston, Founder of the SSMPA." I am one of the many people who miss Jan and her enthusiasm, and it felt good to "hear her voice" again, even if it was only in writing.

I wish to comment on one particular statement that Jan made in the LA Times interview: "Chatsworth has a village site and they destroyed two-thirds of it when they put that 118 Freeway in. They destroyed it without even investigating what was there, and that is a crime." To begin with, Chatsworth is blessed because it has two of the last extant Native American villages in the San Fernando Valley. One, the lesser known, is located in Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. A Native American village site, early historic remains, a Civil War era road, turn of the 19th-20th Century sites, and a fabulous natural environment all exist in close proximity to each other. The site(s) that Jan refers to is (are) mostly south of the 118 Freeway and east of Topanga Cyn. Blvd. Although there are, or were, dozens of sites in the area, almost all are in some way related to a permanent village site that was centered in what is now the Chatsworth Academy, and the immediately adjacent neighborhood. Many other sites are situated around the mounts of Devil's Cyn. and Brown's Cyn., which flow southward and into the valley, just to the east of the Academy). Although it is true that a large part of the outskirts of the village area was destroyed when the 118 Freeway was built, the most important parts of the village were either entirely untouched (by the Freeway), or were at least examined and recorded by archaeologists, before construction began.

However, the most important part of the village was south of the freeway (the village was called Momonga). The main components of the village itself were archaeologically tested before the expansion of Chatsworth Academy (during the '70s). After being sampled, the site, the most of which was left untouched, was capped with clean fill soil. Bedrock mortar outcrops, and what was once one of the most important pictograph sites in the San Fernando Valley, were incorporated into the landscaping and all new buildings were built on the clean fill soil. Unfortunately, some of the most interesting parts of the village complex, the Mourning Ceremony component (a very important religious site), and the cemetery component, were destroyed when the local neighborhood, just south of the main part of the academy, was built (but only after thorough archaeological excavation).

Today, numerous, mostly small archaeological sites are still found both north and south of the 118 Freeway, and isolated artifacts are still occasionally found throughout "upland" Chatsworth.

Best regards,

Albert Knight, Archeologist

Board of Directors, SFV Historical Society

[reprinted from Summer issue - 2002]



# HIKES



- Sun., 2/19: Stagecoach Trail - 9:00 a.m.** Interpretative hike into history in our Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. Meet at 9:00 am for a 4 mi (700' gain) loop up the Stage Coach Trail. From Topanga Canyon Blvd., turn Won Devonshire, drive into Chatsworth Park S to the 2nd parking lot. Wear long pants, lugsoles, bring water & snack. Ldr: Lee Baum (818) 341-1850; Asst. Bob Galletly. *Sierra Club (Santa Susana Mountains Task Force) Outing.*
- Tues., 2/21: Las Virgenes Canyon - 8:30 a.m.** 4-6 mi easy pace, 500' gain hike on picturesque trail. Meet at kiosk (take 101 Fwy to Las Virgenes Rd, N to end of road, park - possible \$3-5 parking fee) Bring water, lunch, hat sunscreen. Rain cancels. Ldrs: Pixie Klemic & Ramona Dunn. *Sierra Club (San Fernando Valley, Wilderness Adventure) outing.*
- Weds., 2/22: Chumash Trail to Fossil Hill - 8:30 a.m.** Moderate and moderately paced 8-mi (optional 10), 1500' gain hike in rolling hills of Santa Susana Mtns. Meet at trailhead (from 118 Fwy, take Yosemite Ave, exit N 1/2 mi, R on Flanagan Dr, continue 3/4 mi to end, street parking). Bring 2 qts. water, hat, lunch, lugsoles, sunscreen. Rain cancels. Ldrs: Bob Galletly & Lee Baum. *Sierra Club (San Fernando Valley) outing.*
- Tues., 2/28: Chumash Trail to Fossil Hill - 8:30 a.m.** Moderate and moderately paced 8-mi (optional 10), 1500' gain hike in rolling hills of Santa Susana Mtns. Meet at trailhead (from 118 Fwy, take Yosemite Ave, exit N 1/2 mi, R on Flanagan Dr, continue 3/4 mi to end, street parking). Bring 2 qts. water, hat, lunch, lugsoles, sunscreen. Rain cancels. Ldrs: Marcia Harris & Ramona Dunn. *Sierra Club (San Fernando Valley) outing.*
- Sat., 3/25: Whitney Cyn Park: A Wild Heritage Hike - 9:00 a.m.** Moderate, 4 mi, 400' gain in new park, north slope of San Gabriel Mtns. Meet at Newhall Park & Ride (15 N to 14 Fwy, exit San Fernando Rd, turn R to end). Bring water, snack, lugsoles. Rain cancels. Ldrs: Henry Schultz (661-284-5613) and Gaylon Rodin (661-263-0568). *Sierra Club (Santa Clarita Valley) outing.*

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. You can read the liability waiver before you chose to participate on an outing at: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>, or contact Outings Dept. at (415) 977-5528 for a printed version.

On **Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m.**, in the Multipurpose Room of the Rancho Santa Susana Community Center at 5005-C Los Angeles Avenue in Simi Valley, **The Mountain Lion Foundation** will present a program entitled "**On the Edge**". This program is a live animal presentation on wildlife-human conflict occurring on the urban edges, i.e., urban areas abutting natural areas, involving a variety of solutions to these encounters. The program will details the specifics on each animal's biology and needs, resulting in an action/reaction resolution to the conflicts in urban backyards.

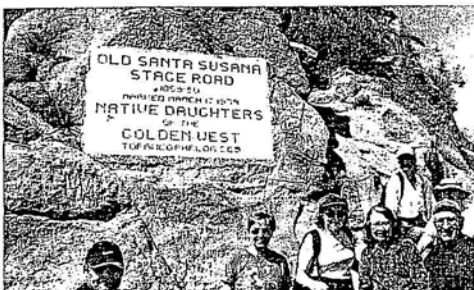
**Thanks for renewing your membership:** Agnes Talley, Mary Thompson, Diane Fike, Audrey Hedlund, Doreen Rusen, Greg Jensen, Mildred Downer, Eleanore & George Rembaum, Mike Stevens, Larry & Helen Merken, Gene & Nancy Krupa, Bob & Kathy Goldberg, The Marty Woll Family. **Welcome new members:** Virginia Watson, Amie & Mike Singer. **New Life Member:** Janice Hinkston. **Thank you for your donations:** Northridge Civic Assn., Ted Dent.

## Dear Members:

Thank you for participating in the SSMPA mission. Your membership is an important investment in our future and that of our children, and we value it.

We have kept membership dues at the same level for many years. Now, with higher postage and other increased costs, it is time to increase the amount of dues accordingly. Beginning with this February newsletter, dues will be \$5.00 more, except for life membership, which will be \$150. Please note the renewal date on your label and send in your dues to continue your membership. Current life members: if you would like to receive the newsletter electronically, please let us know. If not, we kindly ask for your support by remitting \$5.00 per year to help us with costs.

*The SSMPA Board of Directors*



## 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.

- Senior or Student ((\$10.00)   
  Individual (\$15.00)   
  Family (\$20.00)  
 Life Member (\$150.00)   
  Business / Organization (\$30.00)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

City / State / Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Interest / Expertise: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Rim of the Valley Resources Study Bill Stalled in Subcommittee**

On Saturday, January 28, a conference on the **Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor** ("ROV") took place in Tujunga. Organized by activists and equestrians from the Sunland/Tujunga area, more than 50 government officials and local environmental, recreational and advocacy groups discussed how to best interlink parks, trails and other green spaces throughout the San Fernando Valley, allowing hikers, bicycle riders, horse riders, runners and others to enjoy the area and yet facilitate wildlife movement. Mary Benson of the Los Angeles Trail Project headed this "Strategies & Solutions" meeting. Mary's group proposed that the ROV be managed under the state's Resource Conservation District ("RCD"). Rather than already established RCDs, she suggested a formation of a separate RCD to manage the ROV. RCD and Dept. of Agriculture officials from Sacramento flew down to attend. Local National Park officials were also there, but LA County officials were unable to attend the meeting due to a LA River trail meeting at the same time. Judy Garris represented SSMPA. The meeting was primarily an introduction of local trail organization representatives to various State officials to show a good support for future funding. Subsequent meetings will be held later with more group representation.

U.S. Rep. Adam Schiff has introduced legislation, HR355-SB 173 (ROV trail study legislation) that would direct the U.S. Secretary of the Interior to study the feasibility of expanding the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area to include the Rim of the Valley Corridor, but the bill is stalled in the House Resources committee with Chairman Richard Pombo. When and if the bill is moved through, the federal government will be able to initiate studies of natural resources, which is crucial. The bill has been rejected numerous times.

**You can help** by writing to Richard Pombo, Chairman of House Resources Committee, 2411 Rayburn HOB, Washington D.C., 20515, Tel: (202) 225-1947, Fax: (202) 226-0861, [rpombo@mail.house.gov](mailto:rpombo@mail.house.gov). Send a copy to your representative in Congress. If you don't know who your representative is, go to <http://www.house.gov> and enter your zip code. Ask Mr. Pombo AND your representative to move HR355- SB173 out of subcommittee so that important studies for natural resources in the Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor can be done.

People or organizations who wish to get involved with the effort are encouraged to send an e-mail to: [info@latrailandproject.org](mailto:info@latrailandproject.org).

### **Save Chatsworth, Inc.**

.....is pleased to announce that the organization has been awarded a Community Beautification from the City of Los Angeles for the year 2006. This grant money will be used to clean up and revitalize the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy park area at the northeast end of Canoga - adjacent to the 118. *Save Chatsworth's* immediate goal is remove trash, graffiti, and non-native, invasive plants, and to plant more natives. The park will remain a natural park for equestrians and hikers to enjoy.

For more details, please visit their website at [www.savechatsworth.org](http://www.savechatsworth.org). Announcements of planning meetings and future work dates will be forthcoming. The first planning meeting will most likely be held mid-February. *Save Chatsworth* particularly wishes to thank SSMPA members for their support of this project!

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

