

A14

# Remember the wildlife

## EDITORIALS

**D**IAMOND Bar can be a traffic nightmare. Part of the bumper-to-bumper melee includes students trying to get to Mt. SAC in Walnut and Cal Poly in Pomona. Frankly, unless it's high noon or midnight, we can't imagine why commuters would even try to use Grand Avenue and other cross-town thoroughfares to reach destinations in western San Bernardino County. But they do.

Yes, there are traffic woes aplenty in our region and the Four Corners Transportation Study was set up to search for solutions within a specific area bounded by the Pomona (60), Orange (57), Riverside (91) and Ontario (15) freeways. But as much as we sympathize with traffic congestion in area cities, we have to side with environmentalists who are wary of solutions such as another road or highway. Their fears aren't unfounded. Area leaders have for years tried to put in roads that would traverse canyons near Diamond Bar or cut through Chino Hills State Park. They know our communities are more than one-dimensional maps and housing plots. Those hills and vales contain wildlife that regularly move between the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino and Riverside.

People such as Claire Schlotterbeck of Brea, who heads Hills for Everyone, and area wildlife activists Don Shad of Diamond Bar and Ann Croissant of Glendora know that they must fight to preserve natural areas. Too often our native flora and fauna have been shamefully absent from consideration when new housing or highways are planned. Thankfully, environ-

mentalists such as these and others are educating our region about the need for coexistence.

That's why we must deal with traffic on city streets by means other than eating up more wildlands. Part of the long-term solution will be completion of the Foothill (210) Freeway and expansion

of the Blue Line into the East Valley from Pasadena. Perhaps the best answer would be to stop building in the Chino and Puente Hills.

But the traffic congestion

along with the air pollution, noise and frustration it produces are already here and members of the Four Corners Transportation Study group are trying to come up with relief measures. We commend their efforts and encourage them to look beyond building a road through a pristine state park.

For instance, Diamond Bar and Walnut might consider picking up the tab for remote parking lots and buses to shuttle Cal Poly and Mt. SAC students to the campuses. Perhaps Fairplex would be interested in leasing parking lots that are underused.

Making streets one-way during rush hours might end gridlock by moving traffic quickly through the communities. These suggestions may prove too difficult to accomplish — we don't presume to have any pat answers. That's why it's vital that all players — cities, commuters, residents and environmentalists — are part of the dialogue. The Four Corners study group is an excellent start. We simply ask members to consider one vital component when searching for traffic relief: Wildlife needs its own travel corridor.

**Traffic problems in the eastern San Gabriel Valley are a major problem, but solving it shouldn't block remaining wildlife travel corridors.**