

Hills For Everyone

Friends of the Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor



Newsletter No. 14

Summer 2005

NEW STUDY SAYS: SAVE THE MISSING MIDDLE!!



M. Schlotterbeck

The Shell-Aera lands and 57 freeway looking northwest toward LA County.

A newly completed biological study entitled "Maintaining Connectivity Across the Missing Middle of the Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor" was performed by the Conservation Biology Institute for the California Department of Parks and Recreation. One State Park official remarked that the Legislature and Governor have made it clear through decades of funding that they "want to do right by this area." The study was funded by an influential Sacramento based non-profit organization, the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation.

Dr. Spencer of the Institute assessed the impact of projects proposed in the Missing Middle, which includes the 3,000 acre Shell-Aera and 5,000 acre City of Industry lands. More specifically he looked at the target species of

mountain lion, bobcat, coyote, mule deer, greater roadrunner and coast horned lizard.

These species are examined because their presence (or absence) indicates the health of an ecosystem. Healthy, diverse ecosystems with rare plants (like our walnut woodlands) are high priority for state funding.

The report states, "The Chino and Puente Hills form a peninsula of wild uplands that jut from the Santa Ana Mountains into the heart of one of the largest unbroken urban areas in North America. Created by shifting earth plates, this peninsula of wild in a sea of development supports a surprising diversity of native wildlife. Severing connections or blocking movement along this corridor with roads or housing

RESOURCES BOND ACT

SENATE BILL 153

How do we save Shell-Aera's land? We vigorously support a Resources Bond Act being carried by Senator Chesbro. SB-153 is targeted for the 2006 November ballot. Polling throughout the state demonstrates continued strong support for water and park measures that protect our dwindling resources. This bill offers an opportunity for funding to purchase the Shell-Aera land and is currently being considered in the Assembly. To be placed on the 2006 ballot, it must pass both the Senate and the Assembly with a 2/3 vote and then be signed by the Governor.

Send your letter of support to, or e-mail, the "Big Five" decision makers. They can be reached at the same address:

The Honorable _____
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

- **Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger**
<http://www.govmail.ca.gov>
- **Senate President pro Tem Don Perata**
senator.perata@sen.ca.gov
- **Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez**
speaker.nunez@assembly.ca.gov
- **Senate Minority Leader Dick Ackerman**
senator.ackerman@sen.ca.gov
- **Assembly Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy**
assemblymember.mccarthy@assembly.ca.gov

WAKE UP CAMPAIGN

Postcards to Shell-Aera

Hills For Everyone's wake up campaign continues to build. At least four thousand postcards have been sent to Raoul Restucci, the CEO of Shell's Exploration and Development Company, urging it's subsidiary Aera Energy to negotiate a sale of its hillside land. Friends of Whittier Hills, the Hacienda Heights Improvement Association and the Puente-Chino Hills Task Force of the Sierra Club joined in our effort and sent postcards as well.

Tell Us

Threats to the Wildlife Corridor by oil giants Shell-ExxonMobil and the rogue City of Industry are highlighted in our new website. Visit it at:

www.SaveTheMissingMiddle.org

Please add your comments on the proposed projects. Go to the Support button and then click "Local Support."

Burma Shave Signs Debuted in Brea

In April and May, yellow signs with jingles (ala the old fashioned Burma Shave signs) dotted Brea streets at ten locations. One popular slogan read:

40,000 more cars

Coming this way

Unless we take

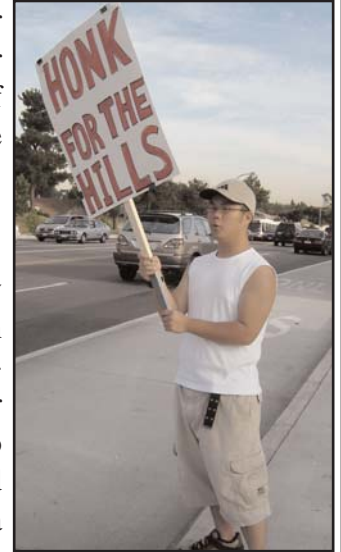
A stand today!

SaveTheMissingMiddle.org

The signs generated over 800 new names to our mailing list and a lot of interest with visits to the new website.

Rallies for the Ridgelines

Sturdy souls with sturdy soles continue to stand on busy intersections throughout the Puente Hills near where Shell-Aera wants to put 3,600 houses and add 40,000 more vehicle trips a day. Often greeted with honks of support, we rally every Friday (except on three day weekends) from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. **If you wish to be notified of our rallies, email us at: info@HillsForEveryone.org or leave a message at (714) 687-1555.**



Join our Rally for the Ridgelines!
Photo by: Carol Yur

Need Addresses, Will Email

Do you want to stay "up to speed" on emerging hillside issues? Then **join our email newsletter list. Send your email address to:**

info@HillsForEveryone.org

We don't share email or mailing addresses and we only send e-newsletters when we think there is something you need or may want to know!

*Hills For Everyone
Co-Sponsors...*

Resource Conservation: Successful Strategies and Funding Opportunities for Creating Healthy Communities

The Local Government Commission, the Institute for Local Self Government, the local non-profit Friends of Harbors, Beaches and Parks and its Orange County Green Vision Project are jointly presenting this daylong conference on Friday, September 16, 2005, at the Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach. The event will focus on strategies to conserve land in Orange County for people to enjoy as parks, recreation areas, natural places and sources of clean water ensuring livable sustainable communities for generations. Whittier Councilman and HFE Boardmember Bob Henderson is a featured presenter. Contact Tony Leonard at 916-448-1198 x315 or aleonard@lgc.org or Flossie Horgan at 714-536-7262 or horganf@aol.com for more information .

Registration is \$55 and available online at: www2.lgc.org/events

CHINO HILLS STATE PARK NEWS

Corridor Growing

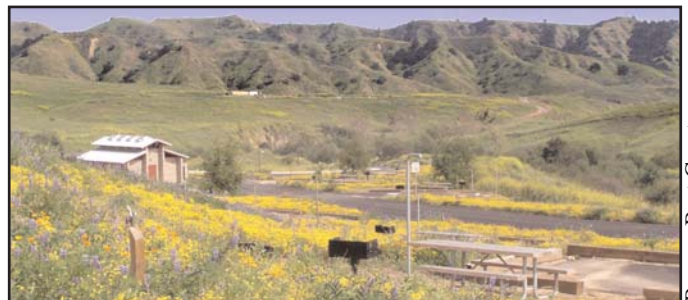
In May, Chino Hills State Park became the proud recipient of 322 acres on the eastern edge of the Park. This parcel was deeded to the state by Lewis Homes as mitigation for a housing development in Chino. The large parcel is an important link toward connecting the 13,000 acre State Park to the 4,000 acres of natural lands in the Prado Basin. Lewis Homes employees, local decision makers and State Park employees and supporters celebrated the addition with a festive barbecue near the new campgrounds.

Newest Campgrounds in California

Twenty new campsites on the eastern side of the Park are now available on a first come first served basis. The sites will take a while to fill in with shade, but the nights are cool and breezy and filled with coyotes' howls and owl hoots. These are the newest campgrounds in the state and comply with regulations regarding wheelchair accessibility. (Photo on right)

Chino Hills State Park Interpretive Association

This State Park support organization is looking for new members. Volunteers help patrol the park on bike or horseback and maintain the native plant nursery. It will be gearing up to assist the State Park once an expected influx of visitors occurs when the new access road and new Visitor Center are complete. On the Chino Hills side, a new paved access road will allow many more visitors to enjoy the Park. Construction of a Visitor Center will begin in January 2006 on the Brea side next to Carbon Canyon Regional Park. Please e-mail Tom Greene at tom.greene@askintl.com if you're interested.



Ranger Bart Grant



M. Schlotterbeck

Participants enjoyed the event at Irvine Park.

DONALD BREN GIFT TO REGION

The Irvine Ranch Land Reserve Trust recently held a dedication ceremony for its new trails and announced an additional \$20 million gift from the Bren Foundation for management of its 11,000 acre reserve next to Chino Hills State Park and the Cleveland National Forest. Hills For Everyone is a strategic partner with the Land Trust.

WILDLIFE NEWS

Raptors on Our Ridges

Two red-shouldered hawks and a Cooper's hawk were released in Powder Canyon on a cool morning in April. About 30 local residents came to watch the excitement. Also in attendance was the La Habra Heights' resident who found one of the orphaned baby hawks and turned it over for care by South Bay Wildlife Rehab in Palos Verdes.



M. Schlotterbeck

This red-tailed hawk was released in April.



M. Schlotterbeck

Phoenix, the cougar, is 16 years old.

Crazy For Critters

Two recent programs by the Malibu-based wildlife rehabilitation group, Nature of Wildworks, seems to speak to people's affection for other living things. The free April event in Brea drew 400 parents and children and featured Pirate, the blind mountain lion. A program in June in La Habra, sponsored by the Puente-Chino Hills Task Force of the Sierra Club, drew roughly 250 residents. This event featured Phoenix (left) and numerous orphaned baby animals including a squirrel, four opossums and two baby foxes. More events are planned, so stay tuned.

CITY OF BREA

City of Brea vs. City of Industry

The City of Brea lost its case against the City of Industry regarding Industry's recent acquisition of 525 acres in Brea's Sphere of Influence at the mouth of Tonner Canyon. Brea has appealed the decision. Since most of the costs of litigation cases like these have already been expended, appeals are generally standard procedure.

Brea Reconsiders Excessive Canyon Plan

Brea revised its General Plan in 2002 and updated its zoning for hillsides. The City based the number of allowable dwelling units in the hills on a formula that takes into consideration the soils, steepness of slope and other natural constraints and hazards. Brea is now looking at applying those same standards to the 20 year old Carbon Canyon Specific Plan that currently governs development in this sensitive canyon. While the current plan would allow about 1,600 dwelling units in Carbon Canyon, the new plan would only allow about 100 units.

WHITTIER HILLS

New Underpass Soon To Be Built

Anyone who has traveled Harbor Boulevard knows of the frequent wildlife roadkills near Vantage Pointe homes and the danger that poses for drivers. Los Angeles County is expecting to receive bids for the construction of the wildlife underpass by the end of July. If they are still within budget, a contract can be awarded and construction can start before the end of summer.

New Trailhead Soon To Be Finished

The Hacienda Hills Trailhead at the end of Seventh Avenue and Orange Grove in Hacienda Heights should be finished by August.

HILLS FOR EVERYONE'S FUNDRAISER

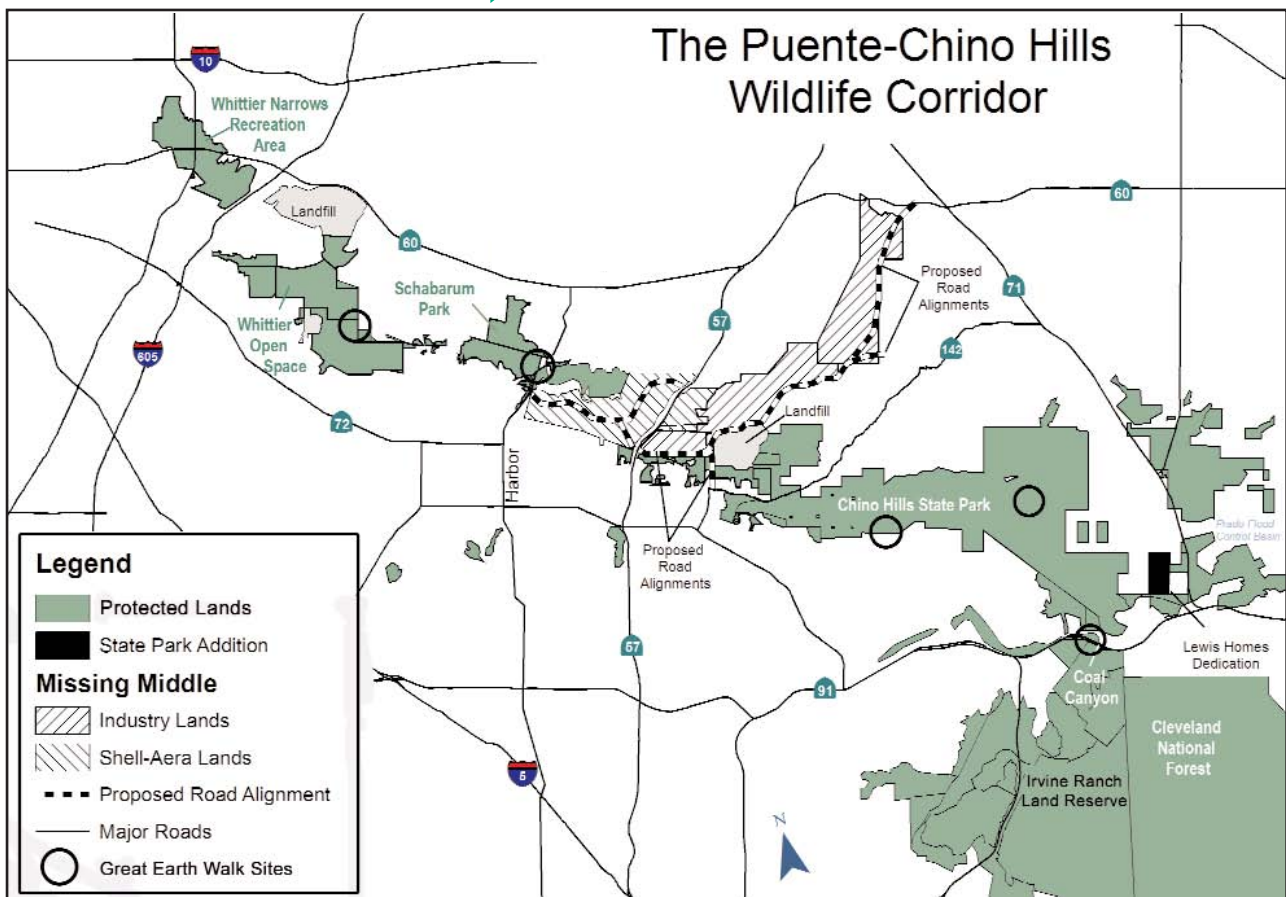
2ND ANNUAL GREAT EARTH WALK
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24



COMING TO A TRAIL NEAR YOU:
RIM CREST, COAL CANYON, ALISO CANYON, POWDER CANYON AND ARROYO SAN MIGUEL

REGISTER ONLINE AT
WWW.GREATEARTHWALK2005.ORG/HILLSFOREVERYONE.HTML

SAVE THE DATE 



OUR LOVELY DANGEROUS HILLS

In recent months we have come to learn more about the origins of our hilly topography. The release of studies about the Puente Blind Thrust Fault suggests it is the most dangerous fault in the country. This fault is “blind” because it cannot be seen (since it is 2-4 miles below the surface); it is a “thrust” fault because it moves up and over another tectonic plate.

This recently discovered fault (1999) lies at one of the convergence areas where the Pacific tectonic plate is grinding under the North American plate. This region was monitored by a network of over 250 global positioning instruments. New projections provide the first rough picture of the potential loss of life and property. The price that nature seems to exact in regions of beauty is danger.

The projections are based on two computer models - one developed at the Southern California Earthquake Center. This projection estimates the shaking associated with quakes of various sizes; a second projection was developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that translates the shaking into economic and human damage.

The modeling was done to give structural engineers and emergency planners a better picture of the possible effects of a Puente Hills Fault quake. According to the Christian Science Monitor, “this is prompting fresh debate about the type and pattern of future development across the nation’s most populous



county. The new information could dictate new zoning limitations, emergency-response plans and other risk-mitigation strategies.”

Dr. Lucy Jones, the U.S. Geological Survey’s Coordinator for Southern California stated, “We are going to have to dramatically ratchet up our hazard maps for development in the future.” She goes on to say that future losses can be reduced “... through personal choices we make, through governmental choices we make and through societal interest in what we’re doing.”

Surely this new information will impact the land use planning efforts for the Missing Middle. Shell-Aera wants to add 3,600 houses on its land and the City of Industry wants to build three massive dams right next door. Decision makers didn’t know about the dangerous fault when so many houses were being built over the last 50 years but now they do know. It is up to us to be sure that this new information is considered, especially since open space is a viable alternative.

Trains and Tunnels and Roads ... Oh My!

Riverside County and Orange County have partnered to assess multi-modal (train, bus, auto etc.) alternatives for improving traffic congestion between the two counties. With federal funding they have embarked on a Major Investment Study (MIS) that will develop a locally preferred alternative by the end of 2005.

As a stakeholder in the project we have been frustrated from the start. The “purpose and need” statement ignores the sanctity of “protected lands.” As such it is open season on Chino Hills State Park, the Cleveland National Forest

and other protected lands.

Planners are likely to recommend a tunnel through the Forest. At first blush this may not sound like a bad idea, but according to experts it can only go 700 feet below the surface due to ground water issues. Thus the plan is partly a tunnel and partly a road. In addition, a service road through the Forest will also be needed atop the tunnel. With the integrity and habitat of the National Forest fragmented, the health of the Puente-Chino Hills is at risk.

Planners assume a MagLev (magnetic levitation) train will be

built down the median of the 91 freeway. Traveling at 300 mph, the train would connect Anaheim Stadium to Ontario Airport and then on to Las Vegas - thereby targeting tourists, not commuters.

Massive corridor expansion - no matter where it goes - merely enables Riverside County to continue its addiction to housing developments instead of creating jobs near the houses. Imagine if the time, creativity, money and human energy were put into planning job centers in the Inland Empire instead of building roads through Forests and parklands!

projects threatens to extirpate species from this urban reserve and degrade ecological health throughout this range of hills - thus eliminating a remarkable ecological classroom within easy reach of millions of people craving a connection with nature.”

Dr. Spencer states that “Although this [Aera’s] conceptual plan appears to show approximately half of the property conserved as open space, it is clear that this open space represents far less than 50% of the biological value of the property, due to severe fragmentation and edge effects, disruption of movements and elimination of live-in habitat capacity for target species.” Spencer goes on to say, “Much of the open space would be totally isolated between bubbles of development and roads... removing

their capacity to support target species.”

Dr. Spencer also shoots holes in Aera’s proposed wildlife corridor through its property. He suggests that even though it is apparently the primary movement corridor, conserving just this land is “simplistic and biologically misleading... long narrow gauntlets of ‘move-through’ habitat will not ensure continued functionality of the corridor system, which depends heavily on retaining the large blocks of live-in habitat in the Missing Middle.”

Regarding the proposed Tonner Canyon Road, Dr. Spencer also determined that a road at the critical Tonner Bridge is highly likely to render the last remaining corridor connection non-functional for mountain lion, deer, bobcat and numerous other species. He concludes, “Given the huge investment already made to maintain the [17,000 acre] Puente-Chino Hills



M. Schlotterbeck

Tonner Canyon Undercrossing from the 57 freeway exit.

Wildlife Corridor, additional conservation investment in the Missing Middle seems not only prudent, but essential if society believes the continued presence of deer, bobcats, roadrunners and other wildlife life is desirable in this unique peninsula of wild in a sea of development.” In addition to specific recommendations for improved crossings at roads for safety of humans and wildlife, Dr. Spencer recommends conserving all of the Shell-Aera property and middle and lower Tonner Canyon.

This document is available for viewing online at:

www.HillsForEveryone.org

FIRST TIME RECIPIENTS

If you are receiving this newsletter for the first time, you either donated funds, participated in an HFE hike, signed a postcard/petition or asked to be added to our mailing list. If you wish to be removed or are on this list by mistake, call 714-687-1555 and leave your name and address or email us at:

info@HillsForEveryone.org

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Hills For Everyone
P.O. Box 9835
Brea, CA 92822-1835

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