

# Hills For Everyone

## Friends of the Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor



Newsletter No. 25

Spring 2011

## STATE PARK DISCOVERY CENTER OPENS IN STAGES

By Kelly Elliott, Superintendent  
Chino Hills State Park

As the new Park Superintendent, I am pleased to announce an addition to Chino Hills State Park. Years after breaking ground, and weathering economic storms which caused a significant delay in construction, the Discovery Center is the newest facility in the Park.

Located at 4500 Carbon Canyon Road in the City of Brea this modern style, green built facility boasts several attractive features. A 1,500 sq. ft. Visitor Center/Exhibit Hall with vaulted ceilings and floor to ceiling windows will soon be home to a variety of displays. The exhibits are still in the design phase but visitors can look forward to a combination of “high” and “low” tech displays sure to please any age. The exhibits will provide colorful information on subjects such as resident plants and animals, wildlife corridors, human



Claire Schlotterbeck

The Chino Hills State Park Discovery Center is located along Carbon Canyon Road, in Brea.

impacts on open space, biodiversity and even geomorphology! Exhibits include tactile features (things you can touch!), video monitors, murals, and more.

The 1,600 sq. ft. Multi-Purpose room can be used for public education and community meetings. Finally, four bright and cheery public restrooms, an “organic” outdoor amphitheater, and short path finish it off.

The parking lot is accessed from Carbon Canyon Road and will accommodate approximately 75 vehicles. A large monument sign will soon be placed near Carbon Canyon Road for all passing motorists to see. Park visitors entering this western side of the Park can visit the Discovery Center on their way to hike, bike, horse back ride, and view

wildlife. We look forward to hosting many educational field trips and exciting special events at the new Discovery Center. The back parking lot was designed to accommodate busses and equestrian trailer parking.

Once the Discovery Center is open to the public, State Park staff will be on site to provide customer service, such as selling park passes and providing maps and information. The Chino Hills State Park Interpretive Association will have a variety of fun and educational items for sale at the same reception counter. Future plans for the site include an Outdoor Education Gazebo, nature trail, and interpretive signs and displays. The Multi-Purpose room and restroom facilities as well as the parking lot will be available for all to enjoy in the coming months.

I welcome you to visit. The Discovery Center will be a place for all to see and discover!



Melanie Schlotterbeck

# GOING, GOING, GONE!

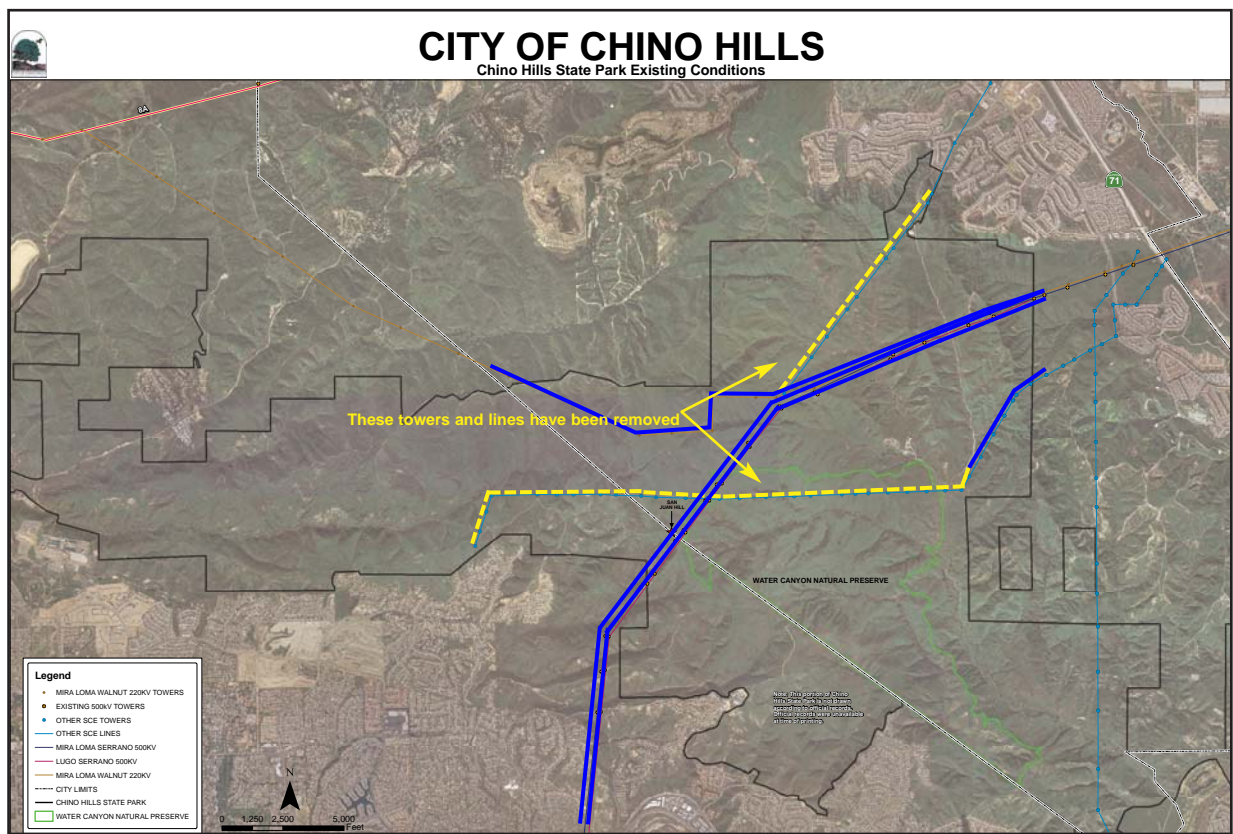
As a result of a 1982 lawsuit settlement between Hills For Everyone and Southern California Edison, Edison agreed to remove deactivated transmission lines from the then-emerging State Park. Three decades later, the towers and wires are finally gone, because the California Public Utilities Commission intervened in 2009. Soon thereafter Edison signed a formal agreement with the Department of Parks and Recreation outlining the steps to remove these towers. By late 2010 Edison had removed nearly all of the 40 deactivated towers and 7 miles of transmission lines.

The task of removing the towers in the sensitive park was tricky. To avoid cutting roads to each of the 40 inactive towers, the Edison crews (for the most part) were brought in by helicopter and the towers were lifted out the same way. Oftentimes the crew needed to secure the pole with guy wires to allow workmen to safely work on the pole. Next, the wires

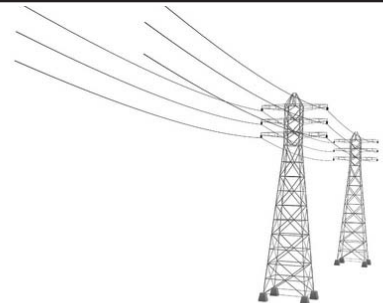
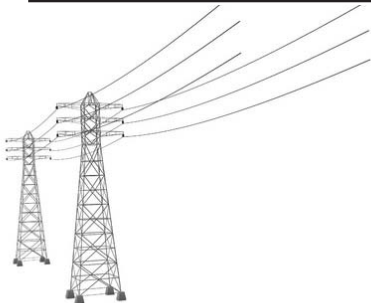
(which had been deactivated for decades) were pulled and stored at the equestrian staging area. Then the removable items (transformers, etc.) were taken off. Depending on the size of the tower, it was either detached and carted off whole or cut into pieces and flown out piece by piece. When the December rains hit, the project was stalled until the dirt roads dried out enough to support the very heavy equipment needed to safely remove all of the debris.

What a difference it has made to the viewshed! Park visitors are enjoying this delayed but welcome victory to improve the Park's views and visitor experience.

Though the State Park was cleared of these old power lines, new large 500 kV towers are being built across the hills and through protected Habitat Authority land as part of the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project.



Existing Edison lines in the State Park





Edison crew being dropped off "at work."



Edison crew at work disassembling the tower.



Obsolete tower being carted off by helicopter.



Now you see Edison towers at the entrance road.

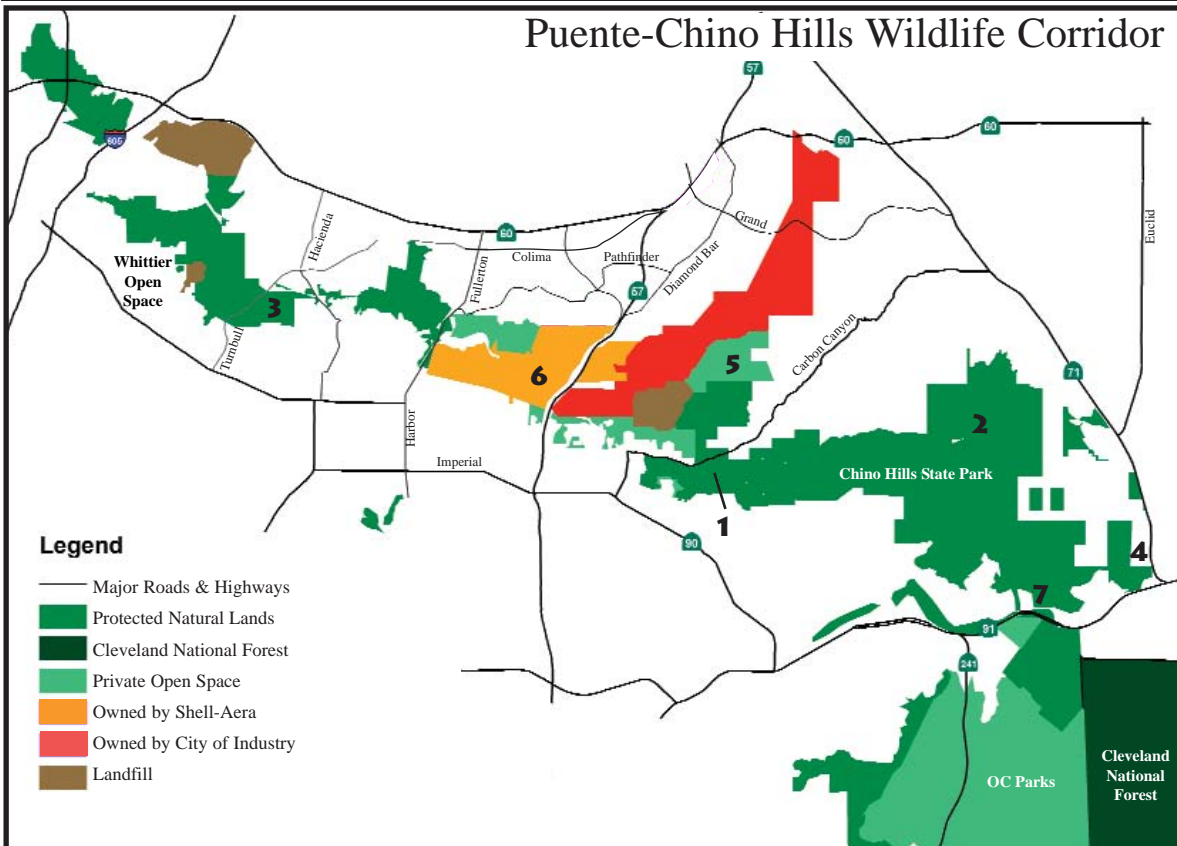


Chaire Schlottenbeck

Now you don't.

## AROUND THE CORRIDOR

### Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor



#### NUMBERS ON THE MAP

- 1 - Discovery Center
- 2 - Powerlines
- 3 - Colima Tunnel
- 4 - 71-91 Study
- 5 - Boy Scout Land
- 6 - Shell-Aera
- 7 - "New" State Park land

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## **Saturday April 16, 2011 Earth Day**

**8:30 AM -1 PM (CHSP Discovery Center, Brea)**

With help from the California State Parks Foundation, the State Park has received generous donations from Southern California Gas Company and Home Depot for the Annual Earth Day project. The new Discovery Center site was chosen for this year's park improvement project to get this new facility off to a great start. Check in starts at 8:30 AM (rain or shine) at 4500 Carbon Canyon Road, Brea.

Bring your muscle and wear some gloves...we plan to move tons (literally) of river rock by hand and strategically place them on the parking lot islands to complete the water wise landscaping theme of the new facility. Families, businesses, scout troops, all are invited to attend! Park Staff will have a preview of the upcoming visitor center exhibits on display, and the facility will be open to tour. Parking will be available in the new parking lot. Enter from Carbon Canyon Road, just east of Carbon Canyon Regional Park.

Please sign up to participate at Earth Day by going to: [www.calparks.org/earth-day](http://www.calparks.org/earth-day). Hope to see you, your family, and your friends at Earth Day 2011 in Chino Hills State Park!

## **April 16 - 17th Green Scene**

**9 - 4 (Sat.) and 10 - 4 (Sun.) (Fullerton Arboretum)**

On Saturday April 16th (9:00 - 4:00) and Sunday April 17th (10:00 - 4:00), the Fullerton Arboretum will open its doors for the annual Green Scene. We could sure use some helping staffing the tables as we have two events on that day.

The Arboretum is located on the south east corner of Associated and Yorba Linda Blvd at the northern edge of the Cal State Fullerton campus.

## **Saturday, April 16th Earth Day**

**9 AM -11:30 AM Arroyo Pescadero (Whittier)**

**9 AM- 11:30 AM Seventh Avenue (Hacienda Hgts)**

Join the Habitat Authority for a Walk 'n Weed event to help remove non-native plants from the preserves. There will be two sites: Arroyo Pescadero trail head at 7531 South Colima Road and Hacienda Heights trailhead at Seventh Avenue and Orange Grove. Learn more at: [www.HabitatAuthority.org](http://www.HabitatAuthority.org).

## **Saturday, May 14th Wildfire Awareness Fair**

**10 AM - 2 PM (CHSP Discovery Center, Brea)**

Chino Hills State Park, at 4500 Carbon Canyon Road in Brea will host the Wildfire Awareness Fair, a project of the Carbon Canyon Fire Safe Council. The event will run from 10:00 - 2:00. Informational and vendor booths will help residents across the hills better protect their homes. Brea Fire and Chino Valley Fire District personnel and equipment will also be present.

## **May 21st Avocado Festival**

**10 AM - 4 PM (The Park, La Habra Heights)**

The Annual Fair at "The Park" at 1885 N. Hacienda Blvd. in La Habra Heights will be held from 10:00 - 4:00. Enjoy crafts, avocado everything (juice, dip, ice cream, shakes) and visit our booth.

## **Monday, July 4th Brea Country Fair**

**TBD (Old City Hall Park, Brea)**

The old City Hall Park fills with fun and food on July 4th, just one block south of Imperial on Brea Blvd. in Brea. We will also need volunteers to help staff the booth at this fair. Email us if you are interested: [info@HillsForEveryone.org](mailto:info@HillsForEveryone.org).

# CORRIDOR UPDATES

## **WINTER RAINS RECOVERY**

The State Park experienced extensive damage with the series of winter storms. Because the Park has not re-established a normal vegetation load because of the 2008 Freeway Complex Fire, extensive landslides slides and washouts needed to be repaired.

## **HABITAT AUTHORITY**

Monthly docent led hikes are held every third Saturday of the month - more info is available at [www.HabitatAuthority.org](http://www.HabitatAuthority.org). The Authority has now graduated a second trained group of volunteer Trail Watchers.

# WILDLIFE MOVEMENT IN THE WHITTIER HILLS

By Shannon Lucas, Biologist  
Habitat Authority

It's been one year since the Habitat Authority started a study to investigate how wildlife activity has changed over the past eight years in the Arroyo Pescadero area (in Whittier off of Colima Road). The preliminary results are in. This study involved the use of track stations (circles of white chalk powder with a scent lure in the middle to attract wildlife) and motion-sensor infrared cameras. The results were compared to those from a study conducted in 2001, using the same methods at the same locations, in order to detect changes due to recreational use of the area, which has increased almost five times since the trailhead opened in 2002.

The current study showed that coyote activity has remained almost unchanged, but deer

activity at the Colima Tunnel has increased. The study also showed that while bobcat activity has nearly tripled in the area since 2001, bobcat activity at the Colima Tunnel has decreased by more than half.

So, what does this all mean? The overall rebound of bobcat activity may be because the 2001 activity levels were low, due to habitat restoration activities that were occurring then, which initially caused disturbance. But since bobcat activity was much higher in 1997 and 1998 (before the area was opened to the public) than current levels, we are still trying to determine what has caused the decrease in bobcat activity. Recreational use of the Colima Tunnel and area may be one reason. However, there could be other factors involved, such as natural variations in wildlife activity patterns, or current restoration



Habitat Authority

activities occurring just east of the Tunnel and Colima Road.

Additional monitoring of the Tunnel will occur in 2011 to help understand this activity pattern. Regardless, the lower number of roadkill along Colima Road near the Colima Tunnel, and evidence of continued wildlife use of the Tunnel, may indicate that it is still functioning as a way for animals to cross Colima Road safely, which also continues to keep Colima safer for motorists.

## 71-91 FREEWAY WILDLIFE MOVEMENT STUDY

Data has been collected in a two year wildlife study undertaken by researchers at the USGS Western Ecological Research Center and Colorado State University to examine the utility of various underpasses on the eastern edge of the Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor. Remotely-triggered camera stations monitored about 50 underpasses and GPS radio collars were placed on bobcats and coyotes to track their movements. Once the data is analyzed, we will report it



here; a final report is expected toward the end of the year. The most interesting preliminary results demonstrate just how early mothers teach their young about the culverts and underpasses.

## USE YOUR CREDIT CARD, HELP SAVE THE HILLS

We have exciting news! Hills For Everyone is now supported by SwipeGood - a platform that allows you to enroll your credit or debit card to "round up" all your transactions automatically and donate the change to Hills For Everyone.

SwipeGood helps you help us. It is by far the simplest way for you to support us. Sign up your card, round up your purchases, and donate the change to preserve and protect the Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor.

To enroll or learn more about SwipeGood go to: <https://SwipeGood.com> click on "Charities" type in "Hills For Everyone" in the search bar and click on the "Sign Up" under the Hills For Everyone description.

Donate via **SwipeGood**

# PROJECT UPDATES

## **FIRESTONE SCOUT RESERVATION MAY BE SOLD** (See Map page 3)

According to its agenda, the City of Industry is in property negotiations to buy the final portion of the Firestone Scout Reservation. That will, for the most part, consolidate the City's ownership of Tonner Canyon - over 8,000 acres of land. None of the land is within Industry's city limits.

## **SHELL-AERA** (See Map page 3)

Though no longer processing its 3,600 unit housing project in Diamond Bar, Shell-Aera has not yet filed any paperwork to begin the approval process through the County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning.

## **STATE PARK GREW** (See Map page 3)

With the stroke of a pen, a cartography pen that is, Chino Hills State Park grew by 70 acres. At our urging State Parks reviewed various documents and confirmed that its Visitor Map short changed the Park about 70 acres near the north side of Coal Canyon Biological Corridor and the Santa Ana River. When the Visitor Maps are reprinted, the correction will be made. That was the easiest and least expensive "acquisition" we have ever experienced.

## **WHITTIER OIL DRILLING PROJECT**

Hills For Everyone attorneys submitted extensive comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the proposed oil drilling on six acres of Habitat Authority land. In this letter, we urged a recirculation of the DEIR since the Alternative they will likely select was not extensively examined. The City has decided that it is unnecessary to recirculate the document so we await the Final EIR to see if the mitigations are adequate for the preferred site. The City will likely choose the Central Consolidated Alternative with the access road going through the Habitat Authority Land and exiting out through the landfill.



Claire Schlotterbeck

The area proposed for the Central Consolidated Site Alternative.

## **EMAIL UPDATES**

If you have not heard from us lately via email please be sure we have your correct email address by emailing us at [info@HillsForEveryone.org](mailto:info@HillsForEveryone.org).

## **POWERPOINTS AVAILABLE**

Free PowerPoint presentations to interested groups on the threats and possibilities for the Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor are available. Email [info@HillsForEveryone.org](mailto:info@HillsForEveryone.org)

## **HILLS FOR EVERYONE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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