

Hills For Everyone

Friends of the
Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor



Newsletter No. 35

Summer 2016

Off-Trail Use Damages Park



Melanie Schlotterbeck

This photo was taken looking east of Easy Street—a legal trail in Chino Hills State Park. This couple decided to create their own trail and thus starts the cycle.

Forty years ago, residents of this region got fed up watching bulldozers tear down ridgeline after ridgeline in the hills. To end the destruction, and to officially preserve the natural resources in the hills we organized, as Hills For Everyone, to create Chino Hills State Park.

Under California law, state parks (as opposed to recreation areas) must be used only in ways that preserve their natural resources (the plants and animals) for present and future generations. The people of California decided long ago that stewardship is our gift to the future.

Over the years, Hills For Everyone has been called on to tackle many threats to the Park's fragile landscape: roads (seven proposed through the Park), landfill expansions, and housing projects. But the growing threat we're witnessing now comes not from those who would bulldoze ridgelines, but from those who claim to love the Park. Imagine our frustration as we watch visitors intentionally and unintentionally destroy the State Park.

There are 95 miles of trails among the 14,100 acres of the Park—that's plenty for wide ranging exploration. Unfortunately, many recreational users disregard the existing trails in favor of making their own trail or taking a

shortcut. Park visitors casually cut across the hills creating "volunteer" trails. Once a trail is cut by one person, it grows and grows, fragmenting the land.

Wildlife already have a hard time surviving especially in this enduring drought. Humans have subjected them to many urban threats: wildfire, cars, and predation by pets. All of these threats diminish an animal's ability to find reliable shelter and food. They live on the edge every day. They have to hunt food every day. If they are forced to burn more calories constantly being vigilant because of us, then we are putting their lives in jeopardy. If they can't establish safe nurseries, they won't reproduce and we will lose them from the hills. Cutting up the hills by trampling or riding across their homeland makes survival even more difficult.

How can you help? Stay on the designated trails and follow the posted speed limit. Encourage friends and family to do the same. Volunteer your time to maintain Park trails. Obey park hours—wildlife need a break from us, just like we need a break from our hectic lives.

As park users, we should be committed to ensuring the Park remains a functional sanctuary for the wildlife that live in it, for the plants they depend on, and for future generations to enjoy. Without the promise to protect wildlife, no funds would have been available to create the Park in the first place. We owe them better stewardship.



A social trail off South Ridge.

Project Updates



Melanie Schlotterbeck

Hidden Oaks (Chino Hills)

This 107-unit project on 537 acres would exit onto overburdened Carbon Canyon Road in Chino Hills. It would add over 1,000 vehicle trips a day. While some residents may prefer the development be “out of sight,” pushing the houses into Soquel Canyon is not only more dangerous in terms of wildfire risk, but also sends runoff into an otherwise undisturbed westward Soquel Creek.

The current housing layout is an oval strand of development on both sides of the ridge. The ample open space touted by the developer is actually fragmented by roads and will become useless to wildlife over time. Further degradation of core habitat is not the answer.

Cielo Vista (Yorba Linda)

This project may go before the Board of Supervisors in October. Residents recently reached a settlement agreement and will not oppose the project due to additional concessions.

Esperanza Hills (Yorba Linda)

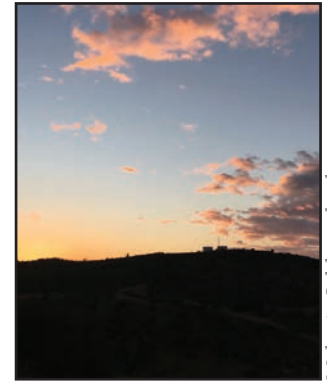
Residents in Yorba Linda won their lawsuit against the developer and the County of Orange. Approvals for the 340 unit project were overturned and the Environmental Impact Report was found to be inadequate. The judge ordered the County to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act. While residents funded the lawsuit, four environmental groups joined the suit including Hills For Everyone.



Melanie Schlotterbeck

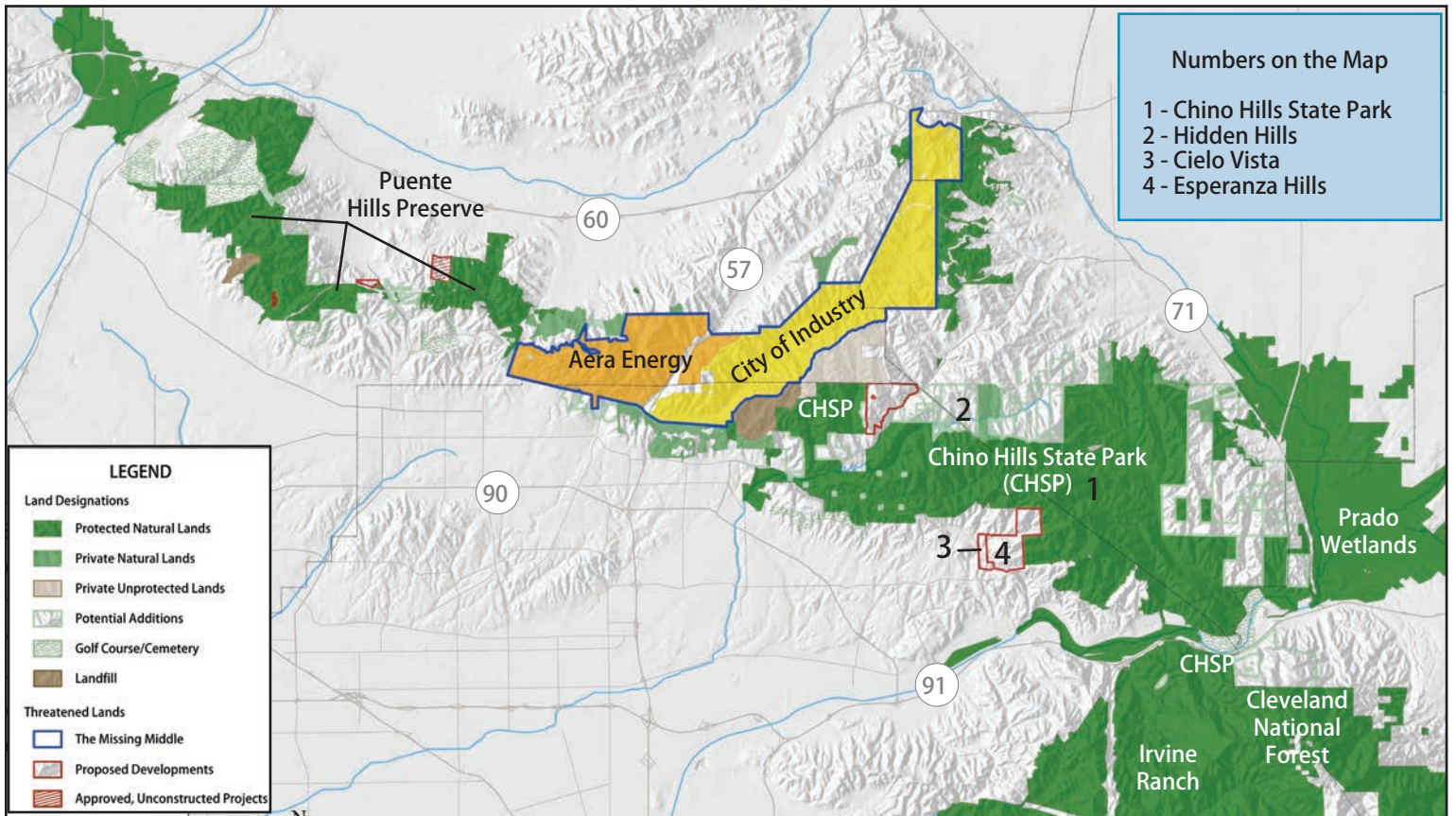
Madrona (Brea)

The bankrupt landowners filed their first brief in their appeal of our court victory. Our reply brief is due soon. Then the appellants have their final brief due in October. It will take another 6-8 months for the appeal to be assigned to, and heard by, a three judge panel.



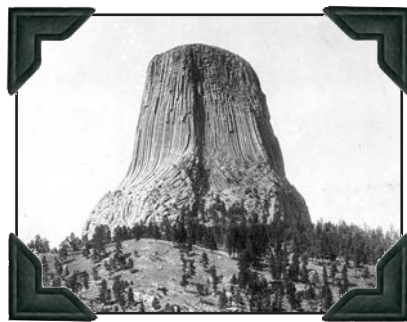
Melanie Schlotterbeck

Mapping the Corridor Projects



September Shindig

We ain't ready to hang up the saddle on Madrona. It's been a rough ride, so Hills For Everyone is roundin' up its posse fer a shindig. Git the long and short of it from one of America's greatest historical heroes of public lands!



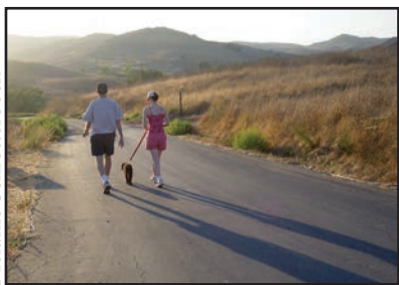
Join Hills For Everyone and our special guest on Saturday, September 24th from 4:30 -7:30 PM at the Ullrich Homestead (160 Buckthorn in Brea). Fixins, dessert, and two sips of bottled courage will be served. Lock, stock, and barrel: 65 bucks each. Git yer seat before it's chockfull. Tickets at: HillsForEveryone.org

Doggy Do's & Don't's

There are very few places in the State Park where dogs are allowed. This is to protect both the dog and the native wildlife. Dogs that mark their territory interrupt the natural behavior of bobcats in their always tenuous search for food and mates. Off-leash dogs also flush out and may chase and kill birds and rabbits.

Dogs that are off-leash also put themselves at risk. Ticks are abundant in brush and they can carry Lyme disease. Recently, a pit bull suffered a rattlesnake bite on the jaw, deep in the Park. Luckily a ranger was there and able to drive them out of the Park. We don't know if it was in time to save the dog.

Always have your dog on-leash. This parkland is for wildlife not pets.



Melanie Schlotterbeck

Meet Your Neighbors

Burrowing Owls

Among the smallest of owls, they are different than most of their species. For one thing they live underground in burrows dug by small mammals. For another, they are active during the day. Their exaggerated long legs add to their unique look as do their white "eyebrows" above bright yellow eyes.

While they have historically been found in Chino Hills State Park, they've not been seen recently. They are present on lands managed by the Habitat Authority.



Tim Bulmer

Mountain Lions (aka Pumas, Cougars, Panthers)

A mountain lion has recently been sighted in the State Park and in Carbon Canyon. A refresher might be useful. First, they are essential to maintaining a healthy ecosystem. Without them, there would be an explosion of mid-level predators like skunks and opossums. These small animals raid bird nests and deplete the bird population who in turn stop distributing plant and tree seeds. Next, if you see a large cat in a natural area and are unsure if it is a bobcat or a cougar, look at the tail. This will help you assess the danger. A mountain lion has a 2-3 foot long tail, while a bobcat has one that is 4-6 inches.

Cougars are solitary creatures who typically avoid people, but they are nothing to mess with. They can jump a six foot fence with a deer in their mouth. A cougar's diet includes deer and smaller animals (coyotes, opossums, raccoons). Don't let them confuse you as prey. If you encounter a mountain lion that does not run from you, make noise, speak loudly, raise and wave your arms or throw something. Don't crouch or turn your back to the animal. Never run—you'll look like prey.

Three Easy Ways to Help Hills For Everyone

If you shop at Amazon, shop through AmazonSmile.org naming Hills For Everyone as your charity of choice. We'll receive a portion of the proceeds for all eligible sales.



Register your Ralphs award card (after September 1st). Go to Ralphs.com, click on Community, Community Contributions, then Participant, and register there. Our organization code is 91199.



Consider a monthly gift that helps protect the hills throughout the year. To enroll, download the Monthly Giving Enrollment Form from our website, complete it, and mail it to us.





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HFE's New Board Member



We would like to welcome new HFE Board member Jeff Garvin. He is the author of the critically acclaimed novel *Symptoms of Being Human*. A long-time resident of the Brea/Chino Hills area, he developed a deep appreciation for nature during long school bus rides through Carbon Canyon. Welcome Jeff!

Grinstead Gratitudes

We had an amazing afternoon at the home of Jolene and Andy Grinstead in Carbon Canyon in late April. The fundraiser brought in much needed money to defend the appeal of the Madrona court victory. The Grinsteads took guests on ATV rides around their 32 acre property which is situated across the canyon from Madrona. A History Wall chronicled the saga of the homestead.

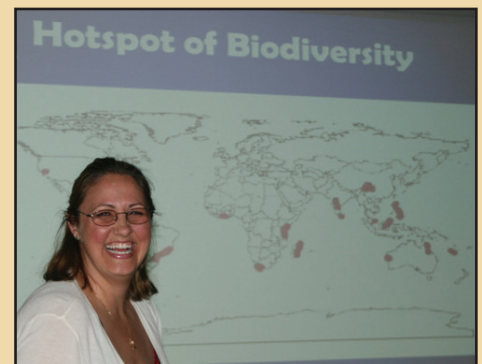
Certainly the highlight was a presentation by falconer Joe Roy who brought a Harris hawk, Eurasian eagle owl, and peregrine falcon. Watching the bird fly free and return was amazing. The afternoon was punctuated by constantly reappearing rainbows.



Jebb Harris

PowerPoints Available

Hills For Everyone representatives provide interesting presentations to local groups, clubs, and organizations. Topics may include biodiversity, achievements, threats or possibilities, the State Park's history, and/or the fire history of the Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor. Schedule a presentation by emailing us at: info@HillsForEveryone.org.



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