



Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council

Protect • Preserve • Maintain

SPRING 2018

UPPER SYCAMORE CANYON TRAIL RESTORATION PROJECT

In the Fall - over a period of eight work days - the crew rebuilt a section of Upper Sycamore Canyon. The trail was so severely damaged during an intense storm in 2014 that it made passage by equestrians treacherous.

The restoration project involved using stone quarried near the trail to build a retaining wall about 28 feet long, four feet wide and varying in height from two to six feet. This trail section is now usable by equestrians, hikers, and trail runners.

Read more at <https://smmtc.org/Projects/UpperSycamoreCanyonRestoration/UpperSycamoreRestoration.php>



Coming Events

2018

- **37th Annual Santa Monica Mountains Trail Days, April 27-29, 2018**
(National Trails Day is June 2, 2018.)
- **Backbone Trek: May 5-12, 2018**
- **Annual Dinner Meeting – Thursday, October 25, 2018:**
6 pm Social,
7 pm Dinner,
7:45 Meeting.
Agoura Hills/Calabasas Community Center,
27040 Malibu Hills Rd, Calabasas 91301.
Dinner & Meeting are free and open to the trails community. RSVP online at smmtc.org.

Trails Council Board Meetings

Board Meetings are open to the public and held at Diamond X Ranch, 26412 Mulholland Highway, Calabasas, CA 91302, on the 4th Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm. There are three exceptions: Nov & Dec, meet on 1st Thursday; no meeting in August.

President's Vision

How fortunate that public Trails are always open to enjoy. So, how have you enjoyed them recently? Were you working with the trail crew? Were you hiking, running or biking on a favorite trail or did you venture onto a new one? Have you taken your horse on the recently repaired Upper Sycamore Canyon Trail – and seen the great stonework that the trail crew did in rebuilding that washed out, dangerous section? Have you been geocaching lately with any luck? Are you planning some summer camping trips to favorite places and trails?

You already know that your connection with trails will give you great joy and improve the quality of your health. You're able to spot the native plants and you can appreciate what it takes to maintain trails. Now take a friend or two with you on a trail and show them why it's so great; and take children with you and introduce them to our wonderful world of trails and wildlife. Since they are the future stewards of the lands, let's make sure they are vested in caring about our landscape. Too many kids today have a Nature deficit with their constant use of electronics. Teach them to use a map and compass besides the GPS. Show friends and kids where some Indians camped; why the names of some trails and places are Spanish and Indian; and how lucky we are to have had large swaths of land saved as ranches and farms, places that today are our public parklands.

Meandering along trails can be a life-changing experience for people who have never seen wild flowers along a trail or deer and coyotes crossing a meadow. A typical educational approach of thinking is that knowledge leads to caring; but an emotional experience on the trail can lead to a real thirst for even more knowledge and for always caring about trails. As more and more people live in urban areas removed from trails and wildlife, it is up to us to inspire the next generation in a way that computers and television can never do.

By maintaining trails, we have combined knowledge with the energy of volunteerism to ensure that the land is saved in perpetuity. Many of you – with determination, skill, and passion – have spent a good portion of your time repairing and maintaining trails.

"The greatest use of a life is to spend it for something that will outlast it," as said by philosopher William James.

Thank you to Carol Gravelle for our beautiful new logo! <https://www.carolgravelledesign.com/>

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS TRAIL DAYS

The 37th annual Santa Monica Mountains Trail Days will be on April 27-29 at Danielson Ranch in Pt. Mugu State Park. Come to have fun, meet other trail enthusiasts and contribute your effort to repair trails. Key hosts for this event are the Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council, the Sierra Club, the Concerned Off Road Bicyclist Association, in conjunction with State Parks and the National Park Service.

At the end of the day on Saturday, State Parks, National Park Service and the Trails Council will provide a delicious free BBQ dinner for volunteers. Please RSVP by April 23.

This event could never happen without many hands working very hard to organize and carry it out. We are grateful to those who are generous with their time and are thankful for the many companies and individuals who will donate raffle items and money to support the event and make it fun. Please visit our website, www.SMMTC.org for a list of those folks who contributed in 2017 and some of the ones so far in 2018 and please support our raffle donors.

Directions: Ventura Freeway to Wendy in Newbury Park. Turn south to Potrero Road, left at Reino, left at first driveway (NPS service road). Cars will be escorted in and out of the park at the times listed below:

Arrive: Fri. - 5:00 pm and 7:00 pm
Sat. - 7:30 am, 4:30 pm
Sun. - 7:30 am

Depart: Sat. - 4:00 pm, 9:00 pm
Sun. - 8:00 am, 2:30 pm

Bring your lunch, beverages, snacks, water and insect repellent. Tools are provided, but you may bring a pick, shovel, Pulaski, McLeod, pruning saw or long-handled loppers. (Please, no light-weight tools or chain saws.)

Suggested: Trail Training Video and weekly trail maintenance schedule on www.smmtc.org

Wear: Gloves, hat, long pants, protective clothing, sunscreen, and work boots or sturdy shoes.

Camping: Bring your gear! Free camping Friday and/or Saturday nights for Trail Days workers at Danielson Ranch. Advance camping registration appreciated by April 24.

Patches: Trail Days patches will be available. \$3 each.

Information: Rain (unless torrential) does not cancel. Register on line at www.smmtc.org. For additional information, contact Barb Thomas at 805-492-0460 or 805-509-3426.

NPS in 100 Years –

In late August 2008, the National Parks Second Century Commission met in the SMMNRA to initialize plans for the next 100 years for the National Park System. Composed of scientists, politicians, conservationists, and others, the group was to examine the state of the national parks today and their potential for the future. The selection of the SMMNRA underscores the strategic importance of urban national parks. It also recognizes the model programs here of NPS, State Parks, SMMC and others in preserving resources and connecting urban and suburban audiences to nature and places of historical significance. There are many challenges and opportunities for managing parks in a complex urban-wildland interface.

The goal of the commission is to create a report that outlines how park services can be expanded to reflect cultural changes and to establish a 10-year program to repair and enhance the parks through public and private funding. NPS is a bureau of the Department of the Interior; and their core mission is to protect parks, so leaders need to inspire and educate the public. Each region will have different challenges.

Some issues mentioned at the meeting – more park funding; growing disconnect between children and nature; people need to experience nature to be fully human; immigrants will be a major growth factor; more urbanism will place pressure on parks; some people are concerned about government seizing private property for parkland; National parks are a central part of American culture and the American psyche; and children are the environmental stewards of the future.

By 2050 Los Angeles will have 33 million citizens living within a one-hour drive of a national park. For more information go to [the following NPS Site](#) .

BACKBONE TRAILHEAD IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

The Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council (SMMTC) has put together a project to improve a select group of trailheads by adding information kiosks with maps and picnic tables. The project provides improvements to twelve BBT trailheads, broken down into four sub-projects.

The Four Project Groups:

- Ray Miller, Danielson Group Campground, Corral Canyon Road
- Latigo Canyon Road, Encinal Canyon Road, Mulholland Highway
- Piuma TH @Malibu Canyon Road, Piuma Road @Hairpin Turn
- Dead Horse Parking Lot, Musch Meadow, Musch Camp, Will Rogers State Historic Park

Read more at https://smmtc.org/Projects/BBT_TrailHead_Improvements/BBT_Improvements.php

ONE OF MY FAVORITE TRAILS

Several times, I have given out-of-town visitors, such as cousins or friends, the experience of a wonderful mountain hike on the 2.3-mile Corral Canyon Loop.

I park in a lot next to Malibu Seafood at 25653 Pacific Coast Highway. This adjacent parking lot is owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and I willingly donate money at the Iron Ranger.

Now I can take my visitors on an interesting hike up the mountain where we enjoy great ocean views and wonderful scenery. The hike takes about an hour and a half. After the hike, the best thing happens, we walk next door to Malibu Seafood for a great lunch.



CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING WITH US

Brush Trimmer, Pole Saw, Handsaw, Chainsaw – all were heavily used tools that appeared numerous times in our trail reports this past year.

A combination of drought and intense rain in above average amounts created a sizable workload for our dedicated trail crew. Several times a month we received reports of downed trees blocking trails. Depending on the size of the tree trunk, our team would be dispatched to cut up and move the tree out of the way.

The above average rainfall brought many spectacular blooms to the mountains. The flip side of that is the dramatic amounts of non-native Mustard & Thistles, mixed in with lots of native tarweed that were crowding out our trails. If you were to have traveled along any of the trails this past Spring/Summer - you might remember the feeling of brush scraping against legs! Marshaling resources and volunteers, we do our best to keep trails open.

Without our efforts, maintenance for the majority of trails we work on would not have occurred. Government budgets for Trail Work are anemic at best - NPS and State Parks depend on us and in turn we depend on you to join us for an event or two each year. Consider joining us for a work event in 2018! Read more at https://smmtc.org/trailnews/2017_Accomplishments.php



CAUTION ON WET TRAILS

Reminder to all trail users: Please wait at least 24 hrs after a rain before using the trails. Those trails in the sun will dry quicker, of course; but those in shaded areas may still be wet and slippery and need several days before they are used.



MEET THE NEW MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sheryl Phelps has lived in Thousand Oaks for over 20 years, joining the board in 2017. Having ridden endurance for over 15 years, she has come to love the Santa Monica Mountains where she conditions her horses on the beautiful trails. Sheryl volunteers patrolling for the parkland agencies in the SMMNRA that include the MVP, Mounted Volunteer Patrol, and COSCA, Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency. Sheryl loves and respects all of the natural resources and wants to keep them well maintained and safe for other trail users to also enjoy.

Don Brusselars, a resident of Somis, is retired from the Aerospace Industry. He is an avid geocacher. Don joined the ranks of our trail crew in 2016 and worked more than 150 hours!

Anne Russell lives in Woodland Hills and joined the Board in 2017. She is a health and fitness journalist and a former editor-in-chief of the women's fitness magazine Shape. She is an avid hiker, trail runner, road cyclist, and mountain biker. Anne serves on the Leadership Council of Girlz Gone Riding, a women's mountain-biking club that advocates for trail etiquette, access, and safety for all users. She is especially interested in studying and protecting the Santa Monica Mountains' flora, having had training in medicinal and edible plants.

Charlotte Pattison grew up in Somis and now lives in the heart of the Santa Monica Mountains. She believes in preserving and maintaining our local trails and that we are all stewards of our fragile environment for future generations to enjoy. She has been active in sharing responsible trail use with others as a Sierra Club hike leader and mountain bike club ride leader. She promotes volunteer trail maintenance opportunities to all trail users. She also enjoys trail running, and competes in Xterra Off-Road triathlons. Charlotte is most passionate about protecting the wildlife and advocates for responsible use of our trails and resources.



Trails Council on the Web

This paper won't self-update, but our website will.

www.smmtc.org

Trail Maintenance Report

From September 1, 2017, through March 4, 2018, volunteers performed 2,358.5 hours of trail maintenance in the Santa Monica Mountains and nearby areas.

Agency	# of Events	Volunteers	Labor Hours	Feet	Miles
COSCA	1	13	58.5	3,600	0.68
NPS	7	73	396.0	17,074	3.23
State Parks	35	278	1591.0	52,095	9.87
Totals	43	364	2045.5	72,769	13.78

COSCA - Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency
 MRCA - Mountains Recreation and Conservation Agency
 NPS - National Park Service
 State Parks - California State Parks



Let's Fix Trail Problems

Please report situations that need attention such as signage repair, vandalism, overgrown trails, erosion, dangerous conditions and other issues. Call 818-222-4531 or email to mail@smmtc.org.



Save the Date!!

The 37th Annual
 Santa Monica Mountains Trail Days
 April 27 - 29, 2018

FIND US ON

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/TrailWorkSMMTC>

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Ruth Gerson President	Georgia Farinella Secretary
Barb Thomas Vice President	Michelle Kemmer Treasurer

DIRECTORS

Don Brusselars	Charlotte Pattison
Steve Clark	Sheryl Phelps
Debbie DiMascio	Anne Russell
John Kross	Lylene Sheets
Jerry Mitcham	George Sherman
Susie Niebergall	

WHAT'S BEST FOR YOU?

A paper copy of this newsletter OR an electronic copy?

Please let us know by emailing to mail@smmtc.org

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Dues are on a rolling 12-month basis. Membership dues will be effective the first of the month following receipt; membership will be effective for 12 months. Please make your check payable to SMMTC and mail it to PO Box 345, Agoura Hills, CA 91376 or you may use your credit card with PayPal.

<http://smmtc.org/membership/>

Thank you for your continued support.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ ZIP _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Check to have newsletter sent by e-mail

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Individual Memberships

Annual Membership — \$35

Life Membership — \$360*

Business Memberships

Supporter — \$100

Patron — \$250

Benefactor — \$500

Donation \$ _____

* Life membership may be paid in three consecutive annual payments of \$120. SMMTC is a tax exempt, non-profit organization under IRS code 501(c)(3).

CONTACTS

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