



Currents

Newsletter of the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy



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The Three Pillars



The San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy is supported by three pillars: Conservation, Education and Recreation. The pillars are the anchor of our mission and everything we do. We are excited to share advancements on all three. Recent wildlife surveys are reinforcing the value of one of the biggest conservation wins of our history — last year’s acquisition of the Del Dios Property. We have

unveiled online learning for our education program, which recently included an in-person event and online gardening workshops. For recreation, the Coast to Crest Trail Challenge continues to inspire great numbers of hikers.

The pillars are our foundation. With your continued support, we will only make them stronger. Thank you!

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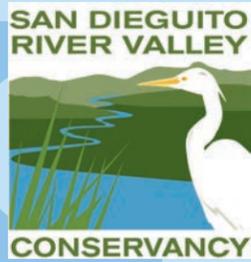
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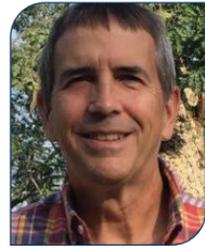
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IN MEMORIAM
Ramona Salisbury Kiltz
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LAYOUT
Nicole Jasso

President's Message



Jim Smith

Spring has sprung, and together with the wildflowers, change is blooming at the Conservancy. We have received more than 80 applications to replace our recently-retired executive director, Trish Boaz. We're getting close to hiring a fantastic, new ED. Stay tuned!

In March of every year, the terms of some board members expire and this year is no exception. We say farewell, or something not so permanent, to Nate Northup (Past President), Shelley Glenn Lee, Kate Sheehan and Bill Adelson. Thanks so much for your service!

Welcome aboard to our new board members, including Chris Khoury, who isn't that new. Chris previously served on the board for 18 years, including three as president. Chris is a retired psychiatrist, resident of Escondido, and longtime Conservancy supporter. Chris will continue to help with land acquisitions and trail

extensions at River Path Del Mar, the Osuna Valley bridge crossing and elsewhere.

Also joining the board is Janice Swaisgood, an educator, Poway resident and former director of the Children & Nature Network. Janice will be a big help in shaping education projects such as Watershed Explorers and Next to Nature, which we run in cooperation with San Dieguito River Park.

Like the flowers that blanket the watershed, the board members (past and present), volunteers and other supporters of the Conservancy enliven our organization.

We couldn't do what we do without you. Thank you!



Chris Khoury



Janice Swaisgood

San Dieguito River Park JPA Message



Shawna Anderson

After years of planning, Phase II of the San Dieguito Lagoon Wetland Restoration has begun!

In January, SANDAG and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in partnership with the San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority (JPA), began work on the long-awaited project south of

Via De La Valle and east of Interstate 5.

This lagoon restoration will create a new trail connection from the Dust Devil Nature Trail to the Coast to Crest Trail, enhance and expand riparian habitat along the San Dieguito River, and convert approximately 84 acres of former agricultural fields and other degraded land into tidal wetlands, which are an integral part of biodiversity in our region. In total, 64 acres of tidal salt marsh, 15 acres of brackish wetlands — which are a mixture of saltwater and freshwater — and an additional five acres of riparian habitat will be restored through this project.

The restoration began with the removal of existing non-native vegetation and accumulated soils that will allow tidal flow and planting of new wetland plant species. The excavated soil will take several months to remove. It will be spread on a nearby slope south of the lagoon

and replanted as coastal sage scrub. The new tidal wetlands and transitional upland habitat will be planted with native plants and maintained in perpetuity.

Project completion is expected in the spring of 2024.

"The restoration of the San Dieguito Lagoon wetlands is a landmark project that will transform the region," said San Diego Council District 1 Councilmember and JPA Board member, Joe LaCava. "I am proud of this collaboration between the City of San Diego, SANDAG, Caltrans, and San Dieguito River Park JPA. Projects that enhance San Diego's unique natural environment while creating long-term sustainable solutions are essential to our community."

Learn more at www.keepsandiegomoving.com.

Shawna Anderson, AICP, is Executive Director of the San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority.



Sponsorships

Thanks so much to SDG&E for donating funds for restoration at San Dieguito Lagoon and Gonzalez Canyon.

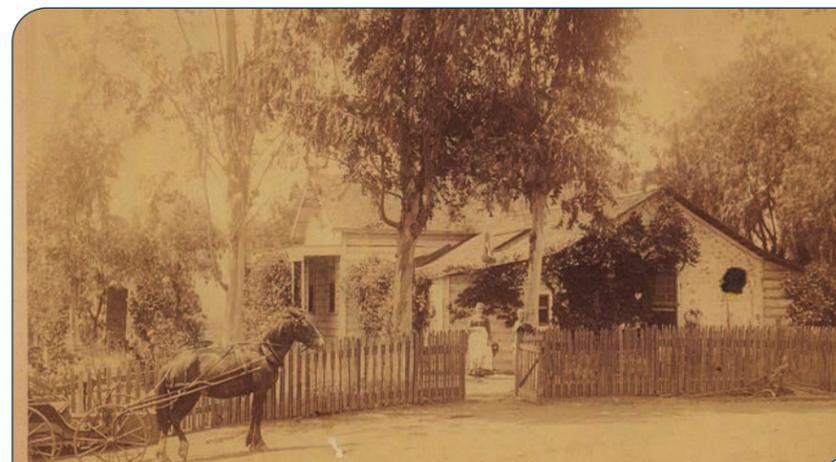


SPECIAL GIFT RECOGNITION: November 1st, 2021 – April 1st, 2022

- Golich Family Foundation
- Heidi Hahn & John Boaz
- Meg Knobel
- Laurie Ann Pefley
- Jeannine McCullagh
- Norman & Patricia Gillespie
- Mike & Linda Mogelinski
- Joel & Kathleen Cook
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- Mary Proctor & L. Mercer McKinley

- Stern Leichter Foundation
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- G. Michael Dorvillier
- Whole Foods
- Charles & Alicia Foster
- Glenn and Randee Warren
- Chris Khoury & Linda Corey
- Carol Dickinson Carr
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- Barbara Bashein
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- Perimeter Family Foundation Inc
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- Paula & William Augustus
- Rev. Julia Erickson & Dr. Tom Hugh McGrath
- Marc L. Sands
- SDG&E
- Julie Hocking and Jim Baross
- Susan Lenz and Donna Tierney
- Greg Vines
- Christa McReynolds
- William Sherrard



Farmhouse Turns 150

The Sikes Adobe Historic Farmstead turns 150 this year. Located at 12655 Sunset Drive, Escondido, the farmhouse is open for public tours at 10:30 a.m. on Sundays. Call 858.674.2270 or visit www.sdrp.org.



Conservation: Abundant Del Dios

One year ago and with tremendous help from donors, we closed escrow on 117 acres overlooking Lake Hodges. Since then, numerous specialists have visited the Del Dios property to take stock of its resources. So far, the surveys show wildlife is thriving and the scrubby slopes are home to an extremely rare bird and plant.

Experts have documented 60 bird species, including the federally-endangered California gnatcatcher, seven species of herpetofauna, and five species of mammals.

As for fauna, the acreage includes 168 plant species, including five considered to be of “special status.” Surveyors have identified a healthy population of Encinitas baccharis. Limited in range to San Diego County and a small slice of Riverside County, Encinitas baccharis is considered “endangered” and “threatened” by state and federal authorities, respectively.

The wildlife surveys will inform a management plan for the habitat, which provides an important connection to neighboring wildland areas. The data-gathering also meets the requirements of the federal and state grants that covered much of the \$2.76 million purchase price.

We will never forget the role our awesome donors played in securing this property for conservation. Thanks to their generosity, the Campaign for Del Dios netted \$322,000 in less than three months to completely cover the Conservancy’s share of the acquisition.

Del Dios Property Surveys

	<p>72 Wildlife Species</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Mammal • 60 Bird (including federally-endangered California gnatcatcher) • 7 Herpetofauna
	<p>168 Plant Species</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes state “endangered” and federally “threatened” Encinitas baccharis



Patti Koger, Buena Vista Audubon Society

Jeff Nordland, San Diego Herpetological Society

Rick Botta, San Diego Tracking Team

Kevin Hunt, Anza Resource Consultants (archaeology)

Justin Daniel, California Native Plant Society

Education: New! Online Learning

Watershed Explorers, Pollinator's Paradise, Thru the Lens — through the years, we have developed these educational programs to get kids excited about nature. Today, we are excited to have packaged the programs as free, online courses.

The courses are designed to bring outdoor, educational experiences to people who are unable to attend in person. The curriculum aligns with state standards and can be used by teachers in public schools.

Watershed Explorers visit locations from the pine forest to coastal lagoons; Pollinator's Paradise explains why pollinators are important and how we can help them with challenges of climate change they face; Thru the Lens activities analyze camera trap photographs to understand wildlife movement across our region.

In another course, "San Diego Wildlife, Climate Change, and You!" students examine the impacts of a changing climate upon four species of concern within the watershed.

The courses are developed in cooperation with San Diego State University, the Conservation Ecology Lab at SDSU, and Climate Kids, with funding from SDG&E and the Conrad Prebys Foundation.

Visit: www.sdrvc.org/current-courses.



Free

WATERSHED EXPLORERS – LAKE HODGES

Led by the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy, students learn about the importance of Lake Hodges and the surrounding area to local wildlife and overall watershed vitality and health.



Free

POLLINATOR'S PARADISE

While participating in the Climate Kids activities of art, science, and storytelling, students will gain an understanding of who pollinators are, their important role in our lives, how they will be affected by a changing climate and increased human activity, and what we can do to help them.



Free

WATERSHED EXPLORERS – SAN DIEGUITO LAGOON

Led by the San Dieguito River Park, students engage in several activity stations to learn about the importance and diversity of the lagoon.



Free

WATERSHED EXPLORERS – SIKES ADOBE HISTORIC FARMSTEAD

Led by the San Dieguito River Park, students learn what it was like to be a pioneering family in San Diego and the importance of the natural environment in daily living.

Next to Nature

Many thanks to the many people who attended our Next to Nature demonstration event March 13 at the Sikes Adobe Historic Farmstead. We had excellent exchanges of information as our hosts imparted easy ways to enhance natural spaces and create wildlife connections right at home.



PHATCROPS

As part of the Next to Nature program, we presented a five-session series of online gardening workshops led by the dynamic Sartteka Am Ab Nefer, lead gardener at PHATCROPS.



PHATCROPS

Recreation: Coast to Crest Trail Challenge

Smiles and selfies continue to pour in from the Coast to Crest Trail Challenge. We love to hear about hikers' adventures and that sweet feeling of accomplishment that comes with completing the treks. In addition to the Coast to Crest Trail Challenge hikes, we look forward to reintroducing guided hikes, full moon hikes and the popular trails and ales hikes into our programming. We'll see you on the trail!



Amy, Todd, Ava and Marston Barnes and Winston



Heike and Richard Rodriguez with Bingo and Willow



Linda Siler and Veronique Kaplinsky



Ted Foster

Riverpath Del Mar

We are proud to partner with the City of Del Mar to advance plans for the Riverpath Del Mar Phase III Extension Project. As planned, the half-mile-long trail would include a combination of decomposed granite walkways, at-grade boardwalks and raised boardwalks. In addition to financial and planning support, the Conservancy has offered the city use of lagoon-fronting property as mitigation to compensate for any environmental impacts the trail might cause. Construction is expected to begin in August 2023 and last about four months. We can't wait for this great, recreational asset to open!



Yoga at the Birdwing

Make that mind, body and nature connection at 10 am on the third Sunday of every month at the Birdwing Open Air Classroom. Susan McCreia leads the free, 45-minute yoga class. Park at the staging area at 15648 San Andres Drive, San Diego.



Spring 2022

SAN DIEGUITO
RIVER VALLEY



CONSERVANCY

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Your support provides for

- **Conservation**
- **Education**
- **Recreation**

in the San Dieguito River Park



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The San Dieguito River Valley Land Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to accelerating the development of recreational multi-use trails in the 92,000-acre San Dieguito River Park, preserving and restoring native ecosystems, and educating the public about our precious natural resources.

Supporting the Pillars

Nature shows us that everyone counts. In our own way, we are pleased to contribute to greater good of conservation, education and recreation. To the Conservancy, every gift of every size advances our mission and supports our pillars. To every donor, thank you so much.

www.sdrvc.org/donate



Photo by
Hanna Zhao