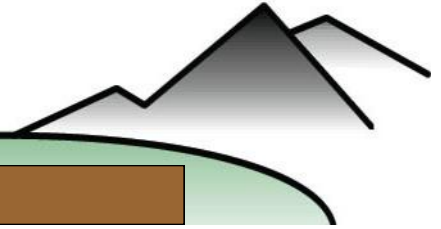


SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS TRAILS COUNCIL



FALL 2011



Trails Council Funds John Deere Gator For State Parks

California State Parks, Angeles District has a new John Deere Gator, a vehicle designed for off-road use, that can carry tools and supplies along trails to work sites.

Above photo shows an *acknowledgement* of the Trails Council's gift as inscribed by Rachel Brenner on the front hood. Brenner, a parks employee and daughter of a Trails Council founder, Margaret Brenner, donated her time to place the wording on the hood.

(Additional photo on page 4)



Coming Events

2011

- *National Public Lands Day – September 24 (story on page 2)*
- *Annual Meeting – October 27 (Thursday) (details on page 4)*

2012

- *Trail Days – coming in April 27-29*
- *Backbone Trek – May 5–12*
- *National Trails Day – June 2*

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 7:30 pm. There are three exceptions: Nov & Dec, meet on 1st Thursday & no meeting in August. Meetings start at 7:30 pm

For details on the Annual Meeting in October, please see details on page 4.

PRESIDENT'S VISION

As we approach the end of this calendar year, the Trails Council will reevaluate the options that will most benefit the trails with our resources of volunteers, funding and energy efforts. Our main focus is, and always be, on trails. However, besides the actual dirt trails, there are ancillary considerations, such as trailheads for access, signage, sponsoring public events, offering volunteer work projects, and coordinating with the land agencies NPS (National Parks), CSP (State Parks) and SMMC (Conservancy).

Further, not only are we ending a calendar year, but next year will be our 40th year! It is certainly a milestone to celebrate our past achievements. Some of the Trails Council successes that stand out are that we:

- Helped design and promote the LA County's Trail Plan for the Santa Monica Mountains;
- Designed and built the Upper Stunt High Trail in Calabasas over 20 years ago;
- Built the Viewridge Trail Bridge in Topanga;
- Designed a trail work program for volunteers;
- Developed criteria for trail crew leaders;
- Provide a trail crew to work on a public trail every Sat. for 10 months of every year;
- Offer a one-week, 65-mile hiking and camping adventure along the Backbone Trail;
- Maintain trails on Santa Cruz Island for NPS;
- Donated expensive trail equipment to State Parks;
- Are one of the original sponsors of the Santa Monica Mountains Trail Days that has been ongoing for 30 years.

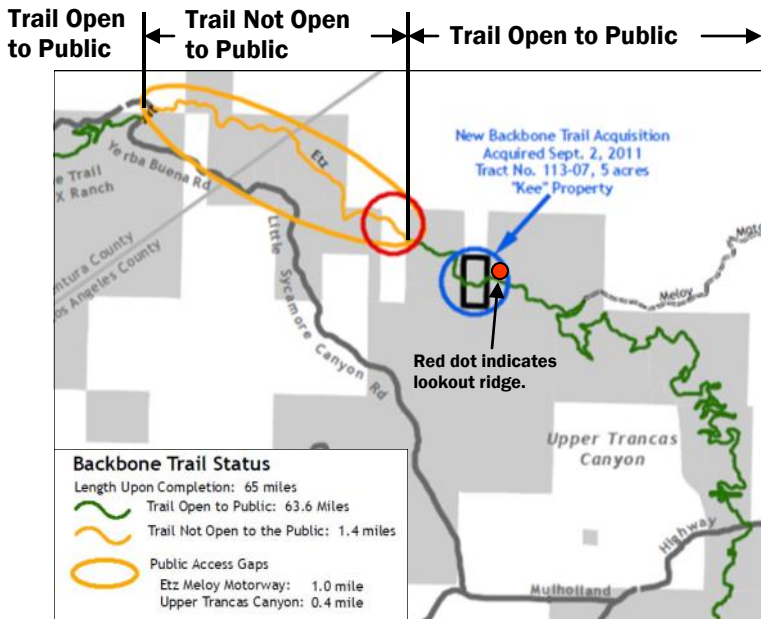
The SMMTC is an organization devoted primarily to the trails of the Santa Monica Mountains; and we have always coordinated efforts to develop the trail system for hikers, bikers and equestrians.

It is a testimony to the Trails Council's ability to partner with government agencies, with other organizations, and with individuals to collaborate and work toward common goals while maintaining a leadership position and enhancing the public trail system.

With the electronic age firmly planted in our lives and not as a passing fad, we must keep up with the times. Fortunately, there are several high tech people on the Board to keep me informed and to keep the Trails Council on the right track. With that said, be sure to check our website to see what's new, what you may have missed before, and where you might consider participating in the Trails Council family.

The Trails Council thanks each of you for your interest, your membership, and your support – both physical and financial. We appreciate your involvement and look forward to seeing you maybe on the trails, maybe at a trail work day, maybe at a board meeting, maybe at the annual dinner meeting, or maybe at a special event.

Ruth



Circled above in the "Trail Not Open to Public" section is a 0.1-mile trail segment still in private ownership. Only one other private segment remains, a 0.4-mile segment between Trancas and Zuma canyons, not visible above.

A suggested hike destination is the lookout ridge shown as a red dot just east of the newly-acquired property.

Map courtesy of NPS

One More Parcel Acquired for Backbone Trail

The National Park Service announced that it has acquired one of the three remaining pieces of land necessary to complete the 65-mile Backbone Trail. The recently acquired five-acre property is along the Etz Meloy Motorway, and just west of a popular lookout ridge. The lookout's 360-degree view of the ocean, mountains and inland valleys offers a good hiking destination accessible from the Encinal Canyon Trailhead on Mulholland Hwy.

Trail users are cautioned to not continue more than one-third mile west on the Etz Meloy Motorway after reaching the turnout to the lookout.

Creation of the Backbone Trail has been a 25-year endeavor, involving the tireless work of citizen trail building groups like the Sierra Club, Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council, elected officials, and the National Park Service, California State Parks, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

"We are so close to completion," said Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area Superintendent Woody Smeck. "Through the relentless efforts of the Los Angeles community and the tireless support of our elected officials, we have slowly but surely pieced together one of the most significant and treasured trails in Southern California."

Trail Maintenance Report

From September 2010 through June, 2011, a total of 2,948 volunteer hours of maintenance were performed on trails in the Santa Monica Mountains and nearby areas.

The number of volunteers times the days they worked totaled 505 volunteer-days. Dividing volunteer hours by volunteer days yields an average of 5.8 hours worked per volunteer per day.

Volunteers

Agency	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Totals
COSCA			8	3				5			16
CSP	41	38	28	35	45	28	36	31	14	50	346
NPS	17	4	13	13	3		69	6			125
NPS C.I.		7	4		4	3					18
Total	58	49	53	51	52	31	105	42	14	50	505

Volunteer Hours

Agency	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Totals
COSCA			32	9				65			106
CSP	266	228	164	194.5	265.5	129	124	173	84	280	1,908
NPS	100	24	65	65	9		316	33			612
NPS C.I.		95	64		100	63					322
Total	366	347	325	268.5	374.5	192	439.5	271	84	280	2,948

NOTES: COSCA (Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency), CSP (California State Parks), NPS (National Park Service), NPS CI (National Park Service, Channel Islands)

Please Volunteer to Repair a Park or Clean a Beach on National Public Lands Day

National Public Lands Day on Sept. 24th will help State Parks with trail work at Leo Carrillo SP and beach clean up at Point Mugu/Sycamore Cove.

Meet at Leo Carrillo State Park at 9 am for either event.

Repair hiking trails at Leo Carrillo State Park or clean up the beach at Point Mugu State Park. This project is a joint effort with local State Parks and National Park Service. Tools will be provided for trail work. Bring a bucket for beach clean up, although additional buckets will be available.

Dress appropriately. Gloves, hat and sun screen are recommended. Volunteers will receive water, refreshments and take home souvenirs.

Take Pacific Coast Hwy. (PCH)(Rt 1) to Leo Carrillo State Park and Beach, approx. 25 miles north of Santa Monica. From the 101 Ventura Freeway exit Kanan Road south and go to PCH. Turn right. Go approx. 14 miles to Leo Carrillo State Park and Beach. Registration required.

Contact Volunteer Coordinator Mike Malone at 805-370-2317 or Mike_Malone@nps.gov.



The 2011 Trekkers paused at the Kanan Road trailhead.

All Hikers on 2011 BBT Trek Completed with Great Feeling of Accomplishment

The annual Backbone Trek was held May 7-14, 2011. Success of the event was foretold early when the maximum number of 25 registrations filled up in mid March. The earliest sell out ever!

One hiker dropped out at the last minute, but the remaining 24 hikers rendezvoused with seven full-time volunteer staff at La Jolla Group Camp on Saturday afternoon. It was an enthusiastic group, bubbling with eagerness to begin the Trek the next day. Many friendships were renewed with the veteran volunteer staff and several repeat hikers.

The trek began on Sunday morning at Ray Miller trailhead. The group hiked from 9 to 12 miles a day for the following seven days. There were many sore legs and blistered feet, but all 24 hikers completed the trek the following Saturday at Will Rogers Historic State Park with no serious injuries and great camaraderie. It is safe to say all participants felt a great sense of accomplishment upon completion. With the exception of a light rain shower the third night on the trail, we were fortunate to have beautiful, near perfect weather the entire week. The spring rain produced many wildflowers for our pleasure, and we counted over 150 blooming species. We were pleased by sightings of various wildlife, including deer, raccoons, a

mountain king snake and a wide variety of birds.

A tradition of the trek are the superb meals in camp every evening. The food coordinator and volunteers deserve our many thanks for the excellent meals.

This year, the Trek received quite a bit of public attention due to coverage in one of our local newspapers. Zeke Barlow, a staff writer for the Ventura County Star, accompanied us on the trek. Every evening he emailed pictures and a written account of the day's hike to the paper, which then printed it in the following morning's edition. His writings included many facts about the Backbone Trail along with personal stories of experiences of the trek hikers. The series may be found in the VC Star archives at

<http://www.vcstar.com/special/backbonetrail/>.

We were also accompanied occasionally by one or two videographers who created and maintain an internet web site titled "Hikes You Can Do." This site features short videos describing hikes in the Los Angeles area. They have now added the Backbone Trek as one of those featured hikes. You can visit the site at <http://www.losangeleshikingguide.hikesyoucando.com>

The 2012 Backbone Trek is scheduled for May 5-12, 2012. Mark these dates on your calendar. Due to the publicity we received this year, we expect to fill the event early. Registration begins in February, so watch the web site at <http://www.smmtc.org/bbtrek/>.



SMMTC Website Features Trail Maintenance Calendar

Trails Council has an interactive calendar for the important volunteer effort of helping to keep trails in the Santa Monica Mountains in good condition. Take a look at www.smmtc.org/trailwork/



Trails Council on the Web

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

www.smmtc.org



This vehicle was donated by the Trails Council to State Parks. Story on page 1.

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.



PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2012

Payments in October and later are credited to the following year. Dues are on a calendar year basis. 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, www.paypal.com

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 annual payments of \$120.

SMMTC is a tax exempt, non-profit organization under IRS code 501(c)(3).

Save the Date: 4th Thursday of October

ANNUAL MEETING

The Trails Council Annual Dinner Meeting will be held

Thursday, October 27, 2011

at the home of Ruth and Grant Gerson, providing an opportunity to meet people who share an interest in trails. Members and trail enthusiasts are invited to bring their spouse and friends. The social hour begins at 6 pm, followed by a complimentary dinner hosted by the Trails Council at 7 pm and the meeting at 7:45 pm.

Please RSVP by Monday, October 24 to facilitate meal planning. Call Ruth at 818-991-1236 and leave your name, phone number and how many are in your group. The Gerson home is at Wolf Creek Ranch, 3450 Cornell Road, Agoura, CA 91301.

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2012 — Backbone Trail Trek — 2012 May 5-12

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