Endangered Habitats League
Earth Resource Foundation
California Trails and Greenways Foundation
California Cultural Resources Preservation Alliance
Banning Ranch Park and Preserve Task Force
Audubon Starr Ranch

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Stop Polluting Our Newport Beaches

Overweight Children in California Counties and the Overall Health and Well-being of Communities

Creating or Improving Access to Places for Physical Activity

Latinos are the second largest minority group in the state of California, and there are large gaps in health outcomes for Latino residents, particularly in terms of physical activity and obesity. This has significant implications for public health and quality of life, as well as for the economic vitality of communities. The Latino Health Access (LHA) Coalition is working to address these disparities and to promote health equity for Latino populations in California.

LHA is working with The Trust for Public Land and the City of Santa Ana to address the need for more open spaces like this one. The City of Santa Ana needs a comprehensive strategy to provide more spaces for children to exercise safely after school hours and weekends. LHA is currently working with the City in the planning of Banning Ranch Park, a multi-purpose facility on what was once the home of the Pacific Colony. The park will include a parking lot and open space in Santa Ana should be considered a public health priority to combat the City's increasing rates of obesity and physical inactivity.

By: FHBP Editorial; Jean Watt, President

You may recall the 2004/2005 Grand Jury issued a scathing report on the status of Orange County's Harbors, Beaches, and Parks (HBP). Entitled “From Riches to Rags,” the Grand Jury stated that “once considered a premier park and recreation system, Orange County’s Harbors, Beaches, and Parks, a division of the Resources and Development Management Department (RDMD), today has been wounded by understanding, understaffing, and county bureaucracy.” The County’s response was to develop a new Strategic Plan to redefine HBP’s values, vision, mission, goals, and strategies and then make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

A Stakeholders Advisory Committee was appointed by the County and many public outreach meetings were held throughout the County over a nine month period. Key issues that emerged were: Funding Regional Parks; Defining Core versus Non-Core Business; Stewardship of Open Space; and Increasing Open Space.

The County, with the help of the Latino Health Access Association, Orange County Latino League, Latino Health Access Coalition, and the Latino Health Access Coalition of Orange County, is working on a new Strategic Plan for the Parks Department. The Parks Department is currently underfunded and understaffed.

Since the 1998 bankruptcy HBP has been a onerous and onerous department most recently named the Resources and Development Management Department (RDMD). RDMD is responsible for numerous and ongoing conflicts and divisions. Everything from Agriculture, Public Works, Food, Coastal Resources, and Development to Watersheds, Coastal Resources, and Parks are under one roof. So funding for HBP (through voter approved property taxes) is subject to raiding for other purposes. Recommendations made by the HBP Director are also filtered through the RDMD Director on their way to the Board of Supervisors. We believe this gives HBP a vulnerability that now threatens to unravel the park system intact.

Given the recent effort to disrupt the leadership of HBP mid-stream of the Strategic Planning process, continue to believe that decisions for the department's well-being should not be filtered through other departments with contradictory interests. All organizations who care about our parks, including the Grand Jury, should be on high alert to protect the public's interest and large investment in the County park system.

For more information on this topic, please contact Justice Sorensen at cowgirlai@aol.com.

IN THIS ISSUE...
GREEN VISION MAP & PROJECT UPDATES
QUICK DIRECTORY OF SUPPORTING GROUPS
THE YEAR AHEAD

January 2007 rang in an array of prospects affecting Orange County parks and open space. Though promising, these are challenged by development of vital open space lands and encroachment upon those already “saved.”

PROPOSITION 44

Voters passed statewide this measure that contains over $5 billion for competitive projects. Protection of the Santa Ana River is promised with a $650 million allocation, at least $10 million of which is directed to Orange County. Those projects that would most environmentally sensitive will more likely secure funding in the competitive program. For instance, the new Law “Low Intensity Development” (LID) encourages projects using less concrete and more permeable soil reducing ramping flood waters down concrete sidewalks.

MEASURE M

The $11.8 billion Orange County Transportation Improvement Plan (aka renewed Measure M) to be voted on in November by voters in Orange County. Three environmental grassroots organizations worked with the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) to provide “comprehensive” rather than piecemeal mitigation of environmental impacts of freeways. This Measure M contains a substantial allocation of vital open space lands and encroachment upon those already “saved.”

Orange County Green Vision Map, we hope, will help define potential mitigation properties.
By: Eduardo Cisneros

There is growing evidence emerging from the public health arena that increasing rates of obesity to the increasing physical activity and improving overall health and well-being of communities.

The City of Santa Ana, like many other cities in California, lacks an adequate amount of parks and open space and is facing various social and health issues as a result. The City, which approximately 17,000 acres in it's entirety, contains only approximately 373 acres of park space. These numbers equate to only approximately 0.9 acres for every 1,000 residents.

The Latino Health Access of Orange County (LHA), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is working to convert a vacant dirt lot into a safe space for the surrounding community. In fact, nearly 2,000 people live in the apartment building directly adjacent to the park. This community resource, once finished, will provide community residents a safe haven to participate in outdoor exercise, and build a sense of community in an otherwise hectic, overcongested urban area. The Latino Health Access Community Center and Park is critical to the City's ability to combat obesity and violence by offering families and children a safe place to spend time together and get fit. However, this area cannot tackle the epidemic on its own. LHA is working with The Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the City of Santa Ana to address the need for more open spaces like this one. The City of Santa Ana needs a comprehensive strategy to provide more spaces for children to exercise safely after school hours and weekends. LHA is currently working with the City in the construction of a park in the community multi-purpose facility on what utilities for the physical activity centers for Disease Control and Prevention, January 11, 2017.

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The beautiful 320 acre Holtz Ranch in the Silverado Canyon area of the Cleveland National Forest is up for sale. The 106 year old Ranch is home to a Juaneño Indian camp, well established wildlife corridors, and the federally endangered Southwestern Arroyo toad. Four different developers have run up against grassroots opposition, very complex water issues, and a possible permanent delay to the current housing project due an endangered species not addressed in the pre-planning phase of development. For 35 years local residents have sought conservation alternatives for this rare and breathtaking site.

 Cove Canoe, the Nature Center is nearly complete. The James and Rosemary Ne Nature Center will open to the public daily beginning Saturday, March 17, 2007. For the Laguna Canyon Wildermens Park’s new headquarters, the Ne Nature Center will be the gateway for recreationalists to explore a vast network of hiking trails through Laguna Coast, Crystal Cove State Park, and City of Irvine Open Space Preserve South. The Nature Center’s picture windows frame four main views into the surrounding parkland, challenging visitors of all ages.

Shell-Aera Looking for Approvals

Shell-EoonMoB’s land development arm, Aera Energy proposed a 3,600-unit development project along the 57 freeway. When Los Angeles County turned the project down because of the damaging impacts, Aera went shopping for a development friendly city and found one in Diamond Bar. During Christmas week, the Diamond Bar City Council stealthily voted to proceed with an annexation of 1,590 acres of the 3,000 acres that Aera owns and a development agreement for 2,800 units and commercial centers. Diamond Bar appears to be over its head since nearly all of the conditions favor the big oil owner of the land. We are working with the citizens in Diamond Bar to stop Aera’s efforts.

Adoption By: 1 Ed Amador, 2 Ellen Girardeau Kempler, 3 Jerry King, 4 Claire Schlotterbeck, 5 Joel Robinson, 6 Jack Eidt, 7 Jan Vandersloot, 8 Sherri Loveland

A Green Vision for Orange County...

This map is the result of ongoing collaborative project between Friends of Harbors, Beaches & Parks and local conservation organizations and agencies. It is a work in progress and is intended for use as a general planning tool only.

Key Conservation Priorities

1. Watershed, Waterbody, or Riparian Projects
2. Habitat Management Plan
3. Priority Stream Restore

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Current Protected/Public Lands

1. Existing Sonja
2. Public Conservation Land
3. Private Conservation Land
4. Wildlife Land
5. Other Map Layers

- High Water Resources
- Natural Resources
- Agricultural Resources
- Protected Open Space
- Important Areas

Santiago Creek Restoration Efforts

The Santiago Creek Watershed Preservation & Restoration Project was formed in 2005 to address land use policy and ecological function from a watershed-wide perspective. We seek to preserve the ecological integrity of the entire Santiago Creek Watershed through community outreach, partnerships, identification of valuable acquisitions, and habitat restoration. We are concerned about land management of the Irvine Ranch; the Trabuco District of the Cleveland National Forest, including private inholdings in the Forest; as well as unincorporated Orange County; county regional and wilderness parks; and land in Villa Park, Orange, and Santa Ana. We hope creative and sustainable plans are incorporated along Santiago Creek.

Visit www.SantiagoCreek.org

Step It Up 2007 – Saturday, April 14

The Orange County Interfaith Coalition for the Environment will be hosting a site for Step It Up 2007 National Day of Climate Action on Saturday, April 14. This event is just one site throughout the nation and gives us the opportunity to ask our leaders to “Step It Up – Cut Carbon 80% by 2050.” Join us at the Huntington Pier and walk up Main Street to City Hall. Prior to the event we hope to deliver letters to each mayor of each city in Orange County, requesting support for programs and other actions that reduce our carbon footprint and emissions. Learn more at www.StepItUp2007.org for more information and to register.

Email emmador@ocgeneral.com

Visit www.LagunaCanyon.org

Visit www.HillsForEveryone.org


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