

Wilderness Link

San Geronio Wilderness Association

May 2014

Volume 2, Issue 2

Calendar of Events

These are the major events of the year. For more information about these and other activities, or to sign up for events go to www.sangorgoniowilderness.org.

May

- 3 Whispering Pines cleanup
- 17 Volunteer training day
- 24 Trail patrols, ranger talks begin
- 27 Board meeting

June

- 7 Thurman Flats cleanup
- 14 or 21 INFRA training
- 24 Board meeting

July

- 5 Thurman Flats cleanup
- 5 Birthday Bash
- 4-5 Ranger talks
- 29 Board meeting

August

- 2 Thurman Flats cleanup
- 16 Forest Festival
- 26 Board meeting
- 30 Volunteer potluck
- 31 Last ranger talk

September

- 3 50th anniversary Wilderness Act
- 6 Thurman Flats cleanup
- 13 Fish Festival
- TBD Radical Reels
- 30 Board meeting

October

- 4 Last trail patrols
- 11 Awards lunch

November

- TBA USFS Volunteer Appreciation

December

- 13 Christmas Party

INFRA: A Measured Approach To Wilderness Trail Surveys

Measuring wheels and tape measures in hand, trained teams of SGWA volunteers survey San Geronio Wilderness trails every year, compiling information the U.S. Forest Service uses to determine funding for trail maintenance and other needs.



The infrastructure project – known as INFRA – provides data on trail features such as the location and condition of water bars, switchbacks, and trail signs, fallen trees and boulders that are blocking trails, and total distances of trails.

Since 1998 Congress has required that 20 percent of trails be surveyed every year, so the SGWA team measures and records data on 20 to 25 miles of the 100-mile wilderness trail system every season, as well as some trails outside the wilderness, said Diana Gossard, an SGWA volunteer and coordinator of the INFRA team.

See INFRA on Page 3

Volunteer Training/Orientation Day May 17

With spring comes daffodils, baby birds, new growth on the pines, and a feeling of wellbeing. Most of all, with spring comes our Volunteer Training/Orientation Day, scheduled this year at 9 a.m. on Saturday, May 17.

New volunteers and returning volunteers look forward to the opportunity to come to the mountains, see what spring has come up with and enjoy the promise of a great summer. Seeing friends from last summer and meeting new ones with like interests seems a highlight at the orientation.

This year's training will feature radio communication and an introduction to different programs in which volunteers can participate:

See Training on Page 5

Summer Mill Creek Restoration Days Resume June 3

The first Mill Creek Restoration Day of the summer will be held at the Thurman Flats Picnic Area on Saturday, June 3, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The picnic area is located on Highway 38 about 3.5 miles northeast of the Mill Creek Ranger Station.

Volunteers will perform a variety of tasks aimed at restoring the area around the picnic site and Mill Creek to their natural beauty, said Mike Roloff, organizer of the event.

Families and individuals also will learn the principles of Leave No Trace, which are designed to minimize human impact on the forest and other outdoor recreational areas.

Smokey Bear will make an appearance, and snacks and refreshments will be provided.

Participants should bring sturdy shoes, sunscreen and gloves.

“This is an opportunity for children and the public in general to get involved in

caring for the environment and learn how they can each make a difference,” said Val Silva, SGWA executive director.

The event is the first of four monthly clean-up days planned on the first Saturday of the month through September.

Sponsors are the U.S. Forest Service, REI, The Snowmelt, The Wildlands Conservancy, and SGWA.

For more information contact sgwa@earthlink.net.

Celebrating Wilderness

Gifts to the San Gorgonio Wilderness Association help support our efforts to preserve the wilderness and the forest surrounding it. We are thankful for these supporters whose generosity makes it possible for us to further our mission to serve, protect and educate. If you would like to make a gift in memory of a loved one or to honor someone special please contact our office at (909) 382-2906, or visit our website at sgwa.org. Gifts may be mailed to: San Gorgonio Wilderness Association
34701 Mill Creek Rd.
Mentone, CA 92359

Individual membership/family

Kirt Babuder	Viviane Helmig
Gary Berry	Bo King
Jeffrey Boehler	Bettye Miller
Steve Cologne	R. Murray
Lee Crandall	Ana Soltero
Kathy Davis	Frank Sprinkle
Carol Graves	Chris Waldheim
Sharon Greer	Jim Weyant
Bob Oppermann and Reiko Snow	
John Farley	Alexander Smirnoff
Kevin Burg	Martin Gutierrez
Alexander Kaklamanos	Patrick Shih
Jim Matiko	

Trailblazer

Lisa Aniello	Mason Consulting
Jennifer Callaway	Scott Modic
John Eisel	Russell Rudeseal
John Farley	

President's Summit Team

Scott Allen
Janie and George Bingham
Diana Gossard
Jim Hill
Terry and Larry Grill
Jaimie LaPointe
Ted Sledzinski and BJ Withall
Robin Thuemler
Charles Marrs
Audrey Scranton

Lifetime Member

Gitty Denver
Bob Hazelton
Malcolm Swift

In memory of Louis Hammel

Dr. and Mrs. Marvin Band
Doris Borrsatino
J. Lane and Cynthia Harris
Marie Jelonek
John and Barbara McCarty
Lisa and Kevin McClelland
Robert and Carole Ottosen
Zachary Taylor
Margaret Winningham

Family of Robert D. Thomas

In memory of Don Davis

Lyn Sandeford and Judy Stump
Irene V. Wakimura Gale

Volunteer Profile: Diana Gossard

Diana Gossard was a teenager when she first backpacked in the San Gorgonio Wilderness. The experience fueled a lifelong love of the outdoors – and the gear that goes with it.

“Backpacking was so different from anything I had ever done. I thought for sure we were going to die out there. It was that exciting and vivid to me. I loved the freedom of being in the wilderness and the reality that you had to carry what you needed on your back to survive.”

Today, Gossard is the manager for a machine shop that makes components for the aerospace industry and has been an SGWA volunteer since 2009. She serves on the SGWA Board of Directors and organizes INFRA volunteers, who survey 20 to 25 miles of trail in and around the San Gorgonio Wilderness every year.

Her favorite place in the San Gorgonio Wilderness? Dry Lake. “Dry Lake changes drastically with every season,” she said. “It can be completely frozen in ice, full of water surrounded with gorgeous green grass, or completely dry.”

Gossard enjoys coordinating the INFRA project, but her favorite volunteer activity has always been

trail patrol. “I really enjoy hiking along the trails and interacting with visitors. Patrolling is very peaceful for the most part.”

Preparing her pack the night before is half the fun as she selects items from the collection of outdoor survival gear she has assembled since childhood.

“You name it, I probably own it,” she said. “I love trying out new gear. I own an absurd amount of backpacking stoves and military mess kits from all over the world. Every country has a kit that’s unique in its design and function.”

Gossard said she became an SGWA volunteer because of a shared belief in preserving the forest and serving the public.

“What I find most rewarding is knowing that my contribution makes a difference,” she added. “What surprised me most about the experience is the organization itself. It wasn’t until I became a board member that I realized what a broad and dynamic range of services SGWA provides. The entire outfit is made up of a great network of people.”



INFRA, from Page 1

Survey data is sent to Washington, D.C. In return, funds are allocated to maintain the trail system. SGWA also uses this data to update and correct map information, and to plan trail maintenance projects within the San Gorgonio Wilderness. This year starts the five-year rotation of surveys again.

“Periodic surveys play an important role in the preservation of the trail system as trail features can be damaged by natural causes or by public abuse,” Gossard explained. “In recent years, decreased budgets, reduction of personnel and competing priorities have had a big impact on the amount of trail condition surveys being completed by Forest Service personnel. The San Gorgonio Wilderness Association in partnership with the Forest Service work together to accomplish the minimum data requirements that have been established by the federal government.”

SGWA has 21 volunteers who have participated in INFRA over the past five years. SGWA provides training every season for new recruits and as a refresher course for experienced surveyors.

“Many people do not realize how beautiful and exciting surveying can be,” Gossard said. “It can be leisurely, and it can be quite adventurous; it can take you to down into stream-filled valleys, or high onto wind-swept ridges. Surveying brings out the hidden secrets of the trail – you’re the trail detective. If you look closely you can see remnants of old trails long removed from maps and evidence of old camps. Through surveying you also gain a greater appreciation of the human history behind the trail, and all the man and animal power involved to cut hundreds of miles of trail.”

Gossard said she got interested in INFRA after attending a training class taught by Jeannette Granger of the Forest Service Trail Crew.

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INFRA, continued from Page 3

“She impressed me with her enormous knowledge of the trail system, and her skillful eye that could detect features on the trail that one would have never noticed,” the INFRA coordinator said. “Her instruction made me realize that there was so much more to wilderness trails than simply using them to get from one point to another. I was also drawn to the scientific approach of measuring, analyzing and recording data, much like the field reports I used to do in college.”

Gossard said her favorite survey was the East Millard Canyon/Kitching Peak survey in November 2010, which was unique because the trails in the area are very eroded and overgrown with foliage.

“The beauty of INFRA is that you explore areas of the mountains you would otherwise never see,” she explained. “This was a challenging survey in which we relied on a programmed GPS route and flagging tape to ensure a safe there-and-back trip. In addition to the rugged nature of the hike itself was the workout of redefining the trail somewhat.”

Manzanita was shoulder-high and required a variety of tools to cut a path. One ridge was particularly steep and sandy.

“We pushed onward for hours, inspired by the amazing views, listening to the rhythmic sound of the wheel pegs ticking against the mechanical counter of the measuring wheel,” she recalled. “But then, with brush so thick we needed to remove our daypacks and crawl on our hands and knees, we achieved our ultimate reward: the tin can summit register of Kitching Peak and the end of our survey.”



Kitching Peak Trail survey

“The return hike was a double delight in that we could now fully enjoy the sights after the extreme concentration on the way up: the canyon below, beautiful with maple and oak trees in full autumn color; the ground sprinkled with the largest acorns I have ever seen; trees with very large claw marks to remind you that this remote tranquil area is indeed bear country. This unmaintained trail is so unused that it won’t be long until Nature reclaims what was once hers. On behalf of the survey team, I can say that we felt very privileged to document this hidden gem of the San Gorgonio Wilderness.”

To volunteer for the INFRA program, sign up for the training in June at www.sangorgoniowilderness.org, see Diana at the May 17 training/orientation class or email sgwa@earthlink.net.

Director's Desk Val Silva, Executive Director

It's amazing to look at SGWA volunteers and see what an exceptional group of people I am able to work with. We all look at people who accomplish great achievements. We read about them in the newspaper, in magazines, we see them on TV. The Olympics are filled with athletes who do what few people are able to do, and we are in awe, inspired, but feel less than perfect in their shadow.

Each and every SGWA volunteer accomplishes greatness. They are from all walks of life, have all kinds of backgrounds and responsibilities, yet they manage to give their time and help in the forest.

Each one brings expertise and interests from their own backgrounds. They find a way to express themselves in the volunteer work they perform.

How many people really do that? How many people do we know who say I want to volunteer and/or do something – when I retire, when I have time, when my kids are grown. SGWA volunteers don't say *when I*, they make it happen. They are champions and have a real sense of accomplishment at what they can contribute. I'm looking forward to a great year for SGWA. Our volunteers will accomplish so much to help the forest and in so doing continue to be champions. I am so lucky to be part of their lives.



Stewards Monitor Heritage Sites

By Gina Griffith

SGWA site stewards started with a straightforward program: Volunteers learned about heritage preservation laws and were assigned a site to check on periodically. At the time, the primary National Forest Heritage Program responsibility was to perform INFRA condition surveys on priority heritage sites every five years.

There was a big change for the San Bernardino National Forest Heritage Program in 2009. The National Trust for Historic Preservation carried out a nationwide assessment which concluded that condition surveys alone were an overly passive type of stewardship. The trust advocated, and the National Forest Heritage Program agreed, that it is necessary to find sites that might be significant, not just hope to locate them while surveying for a fuels project.



Volunteers survey Horse Meadows.

Sites should be evaluated to see if they qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Condition surveys are necessary to make sure that eligible sites retain their historic integrity. But if a site is threatened by erosion, vandalism, or termites, something should be done to protect it.

Since 2009, SBNF heritage staff and SGWA site stewards have worked toward a well-rounded program. Heritage field surveys have located and recorded sites such as the last Hidden Acres cabin and the ill-fated Seven Oaks Lodge. Others have started recording sites such as Camp Tulakes.

Andy Johnson, citrus expert, has extended his stewarding of an historical apple ranch into researching the apples developed at that ranch. CT Alderson is researching the history of the roads in the former San Geronio District. Domenic Wager organized a heritage tour for SGWA last year and is thinking about adding walks for the public this year. And Ardis Beckner put together the text for a sign at Horse Meadows, a project the SBNF hopes to complete this year as SGWA celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act with new trailhead signs.

Training, from Page 1

Interpretive – Learn about volunteering at Mill Creek Front Desk, Big Falls, Horse Meadows and Barton Flats, and interacting with the public.

Trail Maintenance – Bob Williams will describe plans for this year, and how to sign up. Try out the cross-cut saw and other tools.

INFRA – Dianna Gossard will talk about INFRA and plans for this year.

Wilderness Patrols – Learn where patrols are needed, water sources and problem areas, the importance of wilderness patrols, both day and overnight.

Jim Sirick will be there flipping burgers to go with the potluck. We look forward to seeing everyone again and welcoming our new “chipmunks” (our first-year volunteers). Sign up at www.sangorgoniowilderness.org or e-mail sgwa@earthlink.net.

Leave No Trace

By Bob Hazelton

Is it ironic that the best way to Leave No Trace begins with being well-prepared by planning properly? The first principle is "Plan Ahead and Prepare" or, from the kids card, "Know Before You Go."

Think about and answer these questions: Where/ Who/ When/ What/ How/ Why/

- **Where** are we going?
 - Get a map and study the path you will take. Bring your compass, too.
 - Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
- **Who** will be going?
 - Split a big group into smaller ones of 4-6 people.
 - Know the abilities of each hiker and plan for the slowest member to be comfortable.
- **When** will we go?
 - Which season will help you decide what clothes and shelter to bring.
 - Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
- **What** will we do along the way and when we get there?
 - Will you be on a dirt trail or a rocky one? Will there be a place to swim or climb? Will you have to cross water by wading?
 - Everyone will be hungry after hiking so be sure to bring enough food. Repackage food to minimize waste and reduce weight.
- **How** will we get there?
 - Carpool to the trailhead and save gas, money and parking space.
 - Will you need someone to pick you up on the other end of a one-way hike?
- **Why** are we going?
 - **TO HAVE FUN !!!**

There's more to the first principle that you can learn about here, <https://Int.org/learn/principle-1>

President's Corner

Jarome Wilson

Fifty years seems like a long time.

Exactly 50 years after the founding of our country two of the few remaining Founding Fathers (Thomas Jefferson and John Adams) died on July 4, 1826. Some were alive who could recall the achievements of these men and their contribution to the nation's founding. Most simply knew them as "important men" from the past.

Fifty years is a very large block of time, even for those who are able to count 50 as a subset of the years they've been alive.

It has been 50 years since a young president was shot on a sunny day in Dallas. Men commonly wore hats to work (and usually not backwards). Parents were beginning to voice concerns over a new form of music. Most Americans had only a vague awareness about advisors we were sending to a far-off land in Southeast Asia. Nine presidents have occupied the White House since 1964.

The first Ford Mustangs were driving the highways in 1964. The Beatles released "A Hard Day's Night." Jimmy Hoffa's whereabouts were well-known.

During most of 1964 a small but very loud group of wilderness advocates let their voices be heard in Congressional committee meetings discussing a

proposed bill to create a national system of wilderness that would include the San Gorgonio Wilderness.

Fifty years ago it was far from certain that Congress would pass this bill and send it to the president.

Thinking back on 1964 must be similar to earlier Americans in 1826 contemplating the achievements of Jefferson and Adams. But consider those in the crowds who could recall that year 50 years further into the future. The world had changed dramatically from 1826 to 1876. The nation was still reeling from the Civil War.

A lot happens in our human story in 50 years.

As we look back on the past 50 years and recall what has been done as a result of the Wilderness Act we should also consider what the next 50 years will hold for us. The world changes dramatically in 50 years. What commemorations will be held? What traits of our current day will seem quaint and unusual to them?

What will be of the San Gorgonio Wilderness in 2064? Most of us will be memories then, but some of you will be able to recall this year. What will be the story you tell younger people then?

Will San Gorgonio be something that they can know and experience, or will it just be a fleeting memory of a bygone era?



SGWA

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