



AFC Expands Protected Open Space in Rubio Canyon

The Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy (AFC) successfully completed acquisition of a pristine, historic 20-acre land parcel of natural open space in Rubio Canyon

on the eastern side of Altadena, California in August 2009. The main hiking access point for Rubio Canyon, this parcel contains important trails and spectacular foothills scenery.

Preservation of the parcel is significant for several reasons. The land is directly adjacent to the Angeles National Forest, so preservation extends the protected areas and allows access. Many hikers use this parcel regularly to enjoy the mountains and Rubio Canyon waterfalls.

The location is also home to the historic Mount Lowe Railway, which provided an amazing mountain experience from 1893 until 1938, and had the distinction of being the only scenic mountain, overhead electric trolley railroad ever built in the United States. The Railway climbed Lake Avenue and crossed into Rubio Canyon. At Rubio Pavilion, passengers transferred to a cable car funicular which climbed the Great Incline to the top of Echo Mountain.

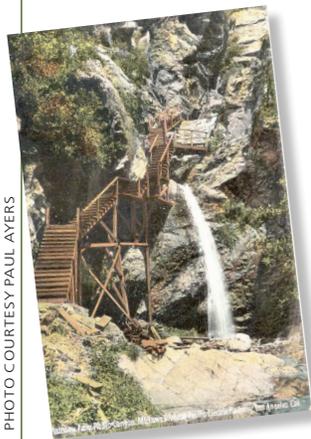


PHOTO COURTESY PAUL AYERS

Vintage postcard shows the stairways at Grand Chasm Falls (note the dam above the falls). The caption reads "Rainbow Falls Rubio Canyon Mt. Lowe Pavilion Pacific Electric Railway Los Angeles, Ca."

The opportunity to acquire this vital open space came together because of informal conversations over the years between AFC board members and property owner Sameer Etman about this beautiful land. Conservation activist Paul Ayers became involved in discussions due to his desire to protect the four historic trails which run through the parcel, ultimately connecting Rubio Canyon to the Pacific Coast Trail.



TIM WENDLER

Lori Paul (left) & John Howell at Rubio Canyon

Mr. Etman, an Altadena resident, holds a master's degree in Environmental Engineering from USC and worked in water conservation for the County of Los Angeles Public Works before he retired six years ago.

"I've enjoyed so many quiet moments there"

An avid hiker, Mr. Etman came to appreciate the pristine condition of the canyon through his many end-to-end walks along the Altadena Crest Trail.

"I'm very pleased that AFC will be able to preserve Rubio Canyon permanently," he stated, "I've enjoyed so many quiet moments there and hope that others now will be able to as well."

As part of AFC's acquisition, the Conservancy will be working with Mr. Ayers, in cooperation with nearby property residents, in clearing and maintaining the trails running through the property.

The challenges of 2009 brought opportunities for change. I'm pleased to report that it was truly a breakthrough year for the Conservancy. I've made the case to you in my previous columns for our expansion and name change. It was the right decision and has brought us immediate dividends. We purchased 20 acres in Rubio Canyon in record time with the help of our new board members, for example.

Speaking of the board members, I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all. It has been such a pleasure to work with the new and old board members of the Conservancy this year. John Howell and Tim Wendler joined the board to bring focus to Pasadena, along with lending us their considerable skills in brokering land deals (John) and fundraising (Tim). Mary Barrie focuses on lands in La Cañada Flintridge, in addition to taking on the job of Treasurer. Marc Stirdivant keeps his eyes on Glendale and La Crescenta.

Our "old" board members have been just as energetic. Lawren Markle finished a two year term on the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Advisory Board; if that wasn't enough he lead the development of a Conceptual Area Protection Plan for the Altadena Foothills and kept the focus on some key parcels in La Crescenta and Altadena. Michelle Markman, our Board Secretary, took over project management of the Old Marengo Park to see it completed and is our representative on the Altadena Community Center Advisory Board. Rob Staehle once again capably managed our third land deal — the purchase of 20 acres in Rubio Canyon. And Lori Paul was her usual indispensable self, managing so many things large and small that they are difficult to enumerate. Anytime you see us at an event, for example, the lovely table display comes from Lori's personal collection of natural history items.

Finally, I want to thank and acknowledge Nami Olgin, past board member, past Secretary-Treasurer, and now past Volunteer Administrator. She has been an important part of the Conservancy's success and we will miss her. But I can't argue with her decision to expand her focus on trash reduction, and living the reduce-reuse-recycle mantra. Go Nami!

Which brings me to Meredith McKenzie, our Administrator and Development Coordinator from August through this February. Meredith's skills, knowledge, and relationships brought a new level of professionalism to the Conservancy. Although Meredith is moving on after seven months with us, we have benefited from her work. Thank you Meredith!

2010 promises to be an even better year for the Conservancy and with your help we hope to do more great things in the name of land conservation. In particular, we are starting the work necessary to become accredited by the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission. Our promise to you is to preserve land in perpetuity and we are doing everything we can to keep that promise. Thank you for allowing us to work for you!

Nancy L.C. Steele, President

Thanks to Passion of Altadena Resident, AFC Receives Major Gift

The Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy received a generous unrestricted gift from the Dale Harbour Champion Fund in September 2009 of over \$56,630.

This gift represents how the shared love of nature between a brother and sister shaped a donor's final bequest with extraordinary results.

Our story really begins with Ninarose Mayer, Dale's younger sister. She and her brother were two of four children, all native Californians, raised in the San Gabriel Valley. Ninarose ended up in Altadena, where she's lived for almost 50 years while Dale moved to Northern California, where he was a newspaperman for the San Francisco Chronicle for over 30 years, the last 10 of which he spent on the environment desk.

Both were avid nature lovers. Dale would visit Ninarose often and he loved to hike in the foothills above Altadena. Ninarose, meanwhile, became very active in the Eaton Canyon Nature Center, where she ultimately served as Program Chair before retiring.

Ninarose first became aware of AFC through Board President Nancy Steele as they are both members of Neighborhood Church. Ninarose later invited Nancy to speak at Eaton Canyon Nature Center about AFC and their relationship/shared love of nature grew.

Dale was divorced with no children, so when he wrote his will several years ago, he decided to leave a portion of his estate (after family member bequests) to several charities around the country, including a number of environmental ones. When Ninarose learned of AFC's work to purchase Rubio Canyon acreage, she knew that Dale's charitable trust gift needed to go to the Conservancy.

Ninarose, of course, is very modest about her role in Dale's gift.

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Nonetheless, she was the person who encouraged him to buy a rare camellia for his San Francisco home at Nuccio's Nursery in Altadena—the person who got him to ride with her while she delivered Wheels on Meals packages, using the drive time to chat about the growing foothills real estate development creep, and the vital importance of protecting open space buffer zones between the Angeles National Forest and

urbanizing Los Angeles area communities.

Dale was an avid hiker, so Ninarose also became his tour guide to the expansive trail system in the foothills area, which he explored

Ninarose Mayer whenever he came to visit her.

Most importantly, when Dale was preparing his will, he gave Ninarose the discretion to distribute his charitable trust funds to an environmental organization.

The Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy is grateful to both Dale Harbour Champion and Ninarose Mayer for their very generous financial support for AFC's mission.

Have you reviewed or updated your will or trust lately?

Why not consider giving the gift of forever by preserving the arroyos and foothills you love to explore and whose viewshed you probably can see from your home?

AFC welcomes a confidential conversation with you and your estate planner to discuss how your living trust or final bequest can save our natural heritage for generations to come.

AFC Receives \$25,000 Grant From SCE



LORI PAUL

Eaton Canyon Nature Park was the site of the very special ceremony on August 4, 2009, when Dave Ford (*above right*), Regional Manager in Local Public Affairs for Southern California Edison (SCE), presented AFC President Nancy L. C. Steele (*left*) a check in the amount of \$25,000 to support the development of a trail plan along the Eaton Wash Corridor.

This grant continues important open space work AFC began in 2008 when the Conservancy worked with Cal Poly/Pomona landscape architecture graduate students to develop the Emerald Horseshoe Concept Plan, for a multi-use, unified urban trail and park system proposed for the Los Angeles region. That plan was funded by grants from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and the Lower Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers and Mountains Conservancy.

The name "emerald horseshoe" references the Emerald Necklace, a 17-mile loop of parks and greenways along the nearby Rio Hondo and San Gabriel Rivers.

The Emerald Horseshoe Concept would create a trail system connecting to the Emerald Necklace via the confluence of the Eaton Wash and Rio Hondo, and extending to the foothills. On the west, the trail system would connect to the Los Angeles River via the Arroyo Seco.

LORI PAUL



Eaton Canyon reception attendees

This system of trails and open spaces would meet a critical need for recreation and non-motorized transportation in our highly urbanized region.

In developing this first-phase Eaton Wash trail plan, AFC will work

with the City of Pasadena (which has committed an equal amount for the Eaton Wash plan within its city budget), the County of Los Angeles (which is working on beautification and water projects along the flood control channel), and the other cities to the south of Pasadena: Temple City, Rosemead, San Gabriel, and El Monte, along with area residents and businesses.

Ceremony attendees included many local dignitaries, including State Assemblymember Anthony Portantino, Pasadena Mayor Bill Bogaard, Pasadena Councilmember Steve Haderlein, South Pasadena Councilmember Michael Cacciotti, and Field Representative Teresa Simpson on behalf of Congressman Adam Schiff.

"Southern California Edison is thrilled to support this important project that will expand open space recreational opportunities throughout our region," stated Dave Ford, as he presented the check to AFC's Nancy Steele.

Nancy added: "AFC is grateful for the leadership of SCE in helping us to preserve and protect open space in the foothills and arroyos of the San Gabriel Mountains. We are also excited about our partnership with local municipalities to make this trail plan a reality."

THOMAS HARRISON





La Cañada Flintridge City Councilman Don Voss (left) with Assemblymember Anthony Portantino (right) and Mrs. Portantino

AFC LAUNCHES Foothills Society

AFC board members and land conservation donor advocates met at the home of California State Assemblymember Anthony Portantino and Ellen Portantino in La Cañada to launch the inauguration of the AFC Foothills Society, a new multi-year donor program to enhance sustainability of the organization's land acquisition fund and stewardship operations.

At this festive event, host Portantino spoke of the importance of preserving the beautiful open space that frames the Southern California foothills communities of Altadena, Pasadena, La Cañada Flintridge, La Crescenta, Tujunga, and Sunland.

Board President Nancy Steele gave an informative presentation on the newly expanded regional focus of AFC, noting several targeted land parcels that were in danger of real estate development.



AFC President Nancy Steele (left) presents Anthony (right) and Ellen Portantino with gifts of appreciation for hosting the event



Left to right: Sierra Club's Don Bremner with Rubio Canyon neighbor Tom Harrison; AFC Board Event Committee Members Mary Barrie and Lori Paul; Supporters Marsha Fowler and Bob Kneisel; the attentive audience



Guests also enjoyed informal mingling while food and drink were provided by Whole Foods Arroyo Parkway Market, Pasadena, California. Raffle prizes and gift bags added to the festive feel.

The Foothills Society serves a vital role in ensuring unrestricted funds to support land stewardship and to help AFC move quickly to acquire key open space parcels when fund-raising windows are tight.

With the 10th Anniversary of the Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy's founding approaching in April 2010, AFC is offering any Foothills Society member who joins and makes a 5-year pledge to the organization by April 30, 2010, to have the privilege of being recognized as a Founding Foothills Society Member.

If you are not already a member, won't you consider joining this elite group of donors who share a long-term vision for preserving our foothills and arroyos? Please contact Nancy Steele at

626-791-8458 or email, nsteele@arroyosfoothill.org, for a confidential conversation. Pledges can also be made to celebrate special events and in the names of children and grandchildren as part of a legacy gift.



Top left: Supporter John Runnette of We're Rolling Productions; Right: Mrs. Altadena Rosa Johnson; Bottom: Anthony Portantino with AFC's Meredith McKenzie, and guests Marguerite Cooper and Charlie Kolhase



Left to right: Nancy presents; Anthony Portantino addresses audience; Waverly School student volunteers

Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy 2009

Thank You

*to all the individuals and businesses who gave
AFC their generous support*

DONORS

*(Foothills Society Members
listed separately)*

Robert & Brownie Allen
Paul & Marshall Ayers
Desdy Baggott
Barbara Bair
Deborah Shelley Baird
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Ashley Gibbons
Whole Foods Market Arroyo Parkway

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(\$10,000 or greater one-time gift)

Sameer Etman
Ninarose Mayer

ENGELMANN OAK FOUNDERS

(\$1,000 annual pledge for 5 years)

Nancy & Bruce Steele
Linda Zinn

SYCAMORE OAK FOUNDERS

(\$250 annual pledge for 5 years)

Mary Barrie & Ted Stork
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Michelle Huneven & Jim Potter
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(\$100 annual pledge for 5 years)

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Please renew your membership as a Friend of the Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy or become a new Friend.

- I am renewing I am a new Friend
- \$30 \$50 \$100 \$200 Other \$ _____
- Please contact me about a larger gift to AFC.

Mail with your check to:

Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy
 PO Box 3
 Altadena, CA 91003-0003
 626-791-8458

The Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization; all donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone(s) _____

Email _____

Thank you for your support.

Station Fire Devastates Arroyo Seco Watershed

Amidst the tremendous progress AFC has made in protecting foothills open space came the devastating Station Fire in late summer 2009, which ultimately burned over 160,000 acres in the Angeles National Forest and adjacent private property, making it the largest wildfire in Los Angeles County history.

In addition to the loss of human life and property, this fire literally scorched the earth, destroying critical habitat, polluting the Arroyo Seco, and forcing animals large and small to migrate into urbanized areas in search of food and cover.



Station Fire August 29, 2009, 2:00pm

More immediately, the winter rains have brought mudslides along Angeles Crest Highway in the foothills and damage to several homes adjacent to the burn area. In the long term, it may take years for the watershed to fully heal.

While none of AFC's parcels burned in this fire, our Rubio Canyon parcel did suffer scarring damage from firefighters' hoses dragged across its ridges.

Repair of this erosion, monitoring of wildlife movement in the area, and educational outreach to remind all of the importance of staying out of the burn area during these volatile times, are key efforts that AFC champions as part of its stewardship effort in protecting the arroyos and foothills.

AFC encourages all its supporters and nature lovers to visit Los Angeles County's CARE (Coordinated Agency Recovery Effort) at www.dpwcare.org to keep abreast of current conditions within the watershed.



Station Fire new growth

Recovery Effort) at www.dpwcare.org to keep abreast of current conditions within the watershed.

AFC Expands Its Vision for Open Space Stewardship

2009 was a landmark year for the organization that has been known as the Altadena Foothills Conservancy for so many years.

In a year of organizational growth, AFC added four new board members to its governing body, expanded its mission to encompass the San Gabriel Mountain foothills from the Verdugos on the west through Altadena on the east, and extending southward through Eaton Canyon and the Arroyo Seco — and most significantly, changed its name to the Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy to better describe its expanded mission.

This new impetus was formalized at a dynamic board retreat at the King Gillette Ranch in Malibu, where board members solidified their commitment to a regional approach to arroyos and foothills land stewardship, inspired by a discussion with Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Executive Director Joe Edminston.



Clockwise from lower left: Joe Edminston, Mary Barrie, Lori Paul, Michelle Markman, student observer Samantha Olivieri, Marc Stirdivant, Lawren Markle

“Our expanded vision for open space stewardship, restoration and environmental education is especially vital as we work to bring critical forest restoration awareness to the residents within our regional reach,” stated Nancy Steele, AFC Board President.

Based in Altadena, California, AFC works with property owners, governments, land trusts, and other stakeholders to acquire, restore, protect, and maintain the natural areas of the San Gabriel foothills and arroyos.

LONNIE FEHR

ROB STAEBLE

Four New Members Join AFC's Governing Board

The Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy is pleased to announce the addition of four esteemed land conservation leaders to its Board of Directors. They join Founding Board members Nancy Steele (President) and Lori Paul (Vice President), along with current members Michelle Markman (Secretary), Lawren Markle, and Rob Staehle. These members bring widespread experience in AFC's expanded regional reach.



Left to right: Lawren Markle, Marc Stirdivant, Michelle Markman, Mary Barrie, Tim Wendler, John Howell, Rob Staehle, Nancy Steele, Lori Paul

Mary E. Barrie (Treasurer) is a retired law librarian and a longtime community activist with an emphasis on trails and open space issues. She currently serves as a La Cañada Flintridge Parks and Recreation Commissioner and as a member of the La Cañada Flintridge General Plan Advisory Committee. In addition, she is an active member of the La Cañada Flintridge Trails Council Board and the Altadena Crest Trail Restoration Working Group.

John R. Howell, a Pasadena-area native, is an attorney specializing in real estate, business, and contract law, including land conservation. John has represented The Nature Conservancy and the Trust for Public Land in numerous transactions. He is a founding member of Open Space Now, an advocacy group for natural open space in Pasadena, a member of the Arlington Garden Advisory Committee, and has been a community activist for many years.

Marc Stirdivant, a Southern California native, is a founding director of Glendale-Crescenta V.O.I.C.E. (Volunteers Organized in Conserving the Environment), where he serves as Chairman of the Board. Marc represents the City of Glendale on the Advisory Committee of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, sits on the board of the Bolsa Chica Land Trust, and is a member of the Sierra Club. Marc is currently a Senior Administrative Analyst for the City of Glendale, where he works to fund urban park and open space acquisitions and enhancements.

Tim Wendler is a professional environmental engineer, specializing in the investigation and cleanup of contamination at proposed new school sites. Tim currently chairs both the Hahamongna Watershed Park Advisory Committee and the Pasadena Recreation and Parks Commission. He is also an Advisory Committee member for the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

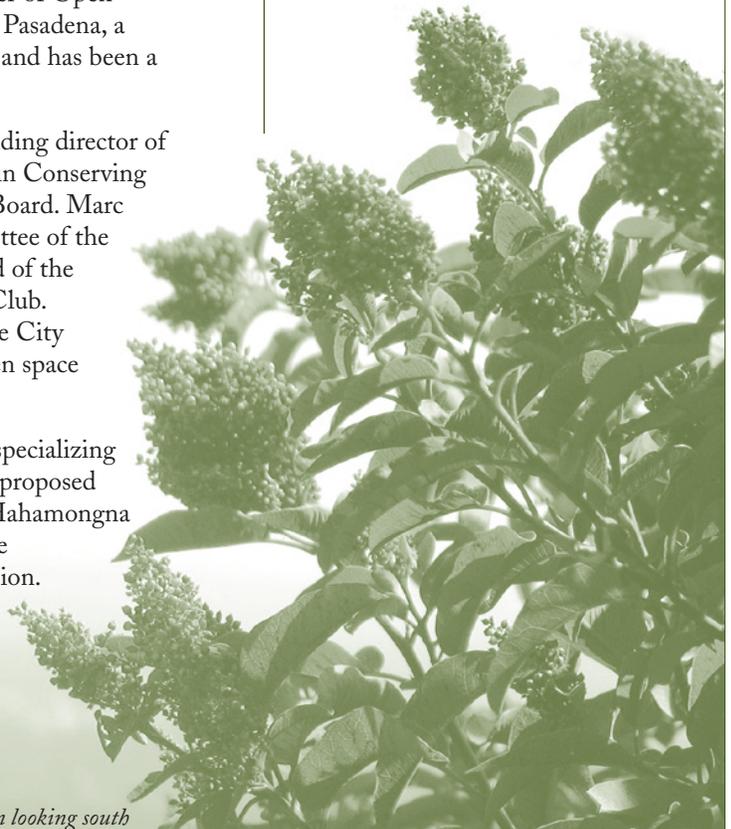
AFC Hires First Contract Employee



The Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy moved forward in 2009 towards advancing its mission through the hiring of its first contract employee, Meredith McKenzie, who helped guide AFC through its name change and mission expansion over a 7-month period.

Meredith, a resident of Pasadena, has over 10 years experience in non-profit environmental and river restoration management, and has worked with such organizations as the Arroyo Seco Foundation, Kern River Valley Revitalization, Inc. and Ventura's Pierpont Beach Neighborhood Council.

Meredith is also an adjunct professor in the Urban and Regional Planning Department at Cal Poly/Pomona, where she teaches classes on environmental planning issues, environmental policy, and California water.



Rubio Canyon looking south



PO BOX 3 • ALTADENA, CA • 91003-0003

10th Birthday Party

ARROYOS & FOOTHILLS CONSERVANCY

*celebrates its 10th Anniversary
of preserving and protecting open space*

*Saturday, May 1, 2010
at the home of
Pasadena Mayor Bill & Claire Bogaard.*

Calendar

Saturday Morning Hikes

AFC conducts periodic Saturday hikes on its Rubio Canyon parcel, led by Paul Ayers, Michele Zack, and other local experts. These hikes are moderately strenuous and cover beautiful, yet untouched natural terrain on this culturally, biologically, and historically significant foothills parcel. These hikes are small group opportunities to truly explore the area while learning about its heritage. Please note that AFC's Rubio Canyon parcel is free and open to all hikers at any time.



AFC Board of Directors

- Nancy L.C. Steele, D. Env, *President*
- Lori L. S. Paul, RVT, *Vice President*
- Michelle Markman, *Secretary*
- Mary Barrie, *Treasurer*
- John R. Howell, Esq.
- Lawren Markle
- Robert L. Staehle
- Marc Stirdivant
- Tim Wendler

Not on Our Mailing List?

Send an email to:
nstele@arroyosfoothills.org
and get on the mailing list
to receive details about these
and other AFC events.

Arroyos Foothills Conservator

Newsletter of the
Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy
Editor, Meredith McKenzie
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