SOUTH SKYLINE ASSOCIATION GENERAL MEETING

Jaqua Ranch • Sunday, August 9, 2015 • Noon until 4pm
Announcements and Presentation to begin at 1:30

Please bring a Potluck Item for Lunch
SSA will provide plates, utensils, lemonade and soft drinks
Join us for our annual summer potluck lunch and presentation.
We will meet on the shaded patio of the Jaqua Ranch on Langley Road (directions below). All SSA members and Skyline residents are welcome.

Wildlife Crossing Structures for Highway 17

Presenters: Tanya Diamond and Ahiga Snyder of Pathways for Wildlife • www.pathwaysforwildlife.com

Tanya Diamond, a Wildlife Ecologist, has developed a research organization, Pathways for Wildlife, with her research partner Ahiga Snyder. Pathways for Wildlife specializes in creating habitat suitability & linkage (wildlife corridor) maps and then verifying linkages wildlife are moving through. Current projects involve collaborating with land trusts and Caltrans to acquire funding to install wildlife crossing structures, such as culverts, for animals to move safely underneath roads.

In September 2013, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, Peninsula Open Space Trust and Pathways for Wildlife joined as project partners to work with collaborators; Nancy Siepel at Caltrans District 5, the UC Santa Cruz Puma Project, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Santa Clara County Parks to identify the best location for a wildlife crossing structure on Highway 17 in Santa Clara County for animals to use to safely cross underneath the road.

The installation of a 10’ by 20’ box culvert with directional fencing to guide animals to the crossing structure would greatly enhance the ability for wildlife to safely cross under Highway 17 and provide an ideal solution for preventing animal-vehicle collisions. This win-win solution would also help maintain healthy animal populations by increasing the ability for genetic flow to occur between populations.

SSA General Meeting Directions: The SSA Meeting will take place at Dick and Ami Jaqua’s ranch on Langley Hill Road. From Highway 84, drive south on Skyline Blvd. 4.5 miles. From Page Mill Rd. drive north on Skyline Blvd. 3 miles. Turn west at Rapley Ranch Road which is across from Thomas Fogarty Winery. Follow the SSA signs.
**CURRENT SSA BOARD MEMBERS**

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<tr>
<th>Current Board Members</th>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>Board Responsibility</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dave Anderson</td>
<td>Highway 9 - Santa Cruz County</td>
<td>Public Safety</td>
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<td>Kristin Anderson</td>
<td>Highway 9 - Santa Cruz County</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
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<td>Patti Begley</td>
<td>Highway 9 - Santa Cruz County</td>
<td>Vice President, Communications &amp; Website Committees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbara Bekins</td>
<td>Highway 35 - Rocky Creek</td>
<td>Public Safety &amp; Water, Website Committee</td>
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<td>Debra Born</td>
<td>Alpine Road</td>
<td>Membership Committee, SSFC</td>
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<td>Kim Hamilton</td>
<td>Highway 35 – Oakridge</td>
<td>Interim board member</td>
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<td>John Harriman</td>
<td>Las Cumbres</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
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<td>Eric Jewett</td>
<td>Saratoga Gap</td>
<td>Adopt-A-Highway</td>
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<td>Jim Parsons</td>
<td>Las Cumbres</td>
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<td>Marianne Rose</td>
<td>Highway 35 - Long Ridge</td>
<td>Communications &amp; Website Committees</td>
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<td>Ruth Waldhauer</td>
<td>Portola Heights</td>
<td>Membership &amp; Communications &amp; SPUG &amp; Website Committees</td>
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<td>Larry Watson</td>
<td>Highway 9 - Santa Cruz County</td>
<td>Website Committee, Public Safety</td>
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<td>Michael Rowe</td>
<td>Highway 9 - Santa Cruz County</td>
<td>President</td>
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**VOLUNTEER NEEDED FOR THE SOUTH SKYLINE ASSOCIATION BOARD**

The SSA Board is looking for one more member. Participating on the SSA Board is a great way to get involved in community events and issues, and meet neighbors.

The board meets at 7:30pm the 2nd Thursday of each month. Some months we do not meet if there is a general meeting taking place. If interested contact any board member (see list of members above) or send an email to president@southskyline.org.

**MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS IN THE SOUTH SKYLINE AREA**

*By Peggy Wargo, SSEPO*

In event of a disaster striking the South Skyline area, the local government emergency services would likely be overwhelmed. The South Skyline Emergency Preparedness Organization (SSEPO) has set up two central locations for emergency medical assistance: At the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) Skyline Field Office (21150 Skyline Blvd at Alpine Road) and at Las Cumbres Community Center (18260 Las Cumbres Rd, Los Gatos).

SSEPO is requesting that local medical practitioners who live in the SSA area who are willing to assist at the emergency treatment center register with SSEPO. If you are a physician, EMT, nurse, medical assistant, psychologist or wilderness first responder, and interested in participating, please contact me directly at peggywargo1@gmail.com.

**HOLD THESE DATES**

*by Georgia Stigall*

Sunday November 15: Las Cumbres Holiday Bazaar

Sunday December 6: La Honda Holiday Fair

More details will be provided in the next SKYLINES & on the SouthSkyline Yahoo!Group
CALIFORNIA MUGWORT IS AT HOME ON SKYLINE  
by Sarah Schoen  

California mugwort (Artemisia douglasiana) is a perennial herb that grows in colonies, 3 to 6 feet high. The smell is difficult to describe, reported as between sage and camphor. On a recent hike, and shortly before deadline, I asked some friends to help me with the description. Answers varied, and I was going to summarize as complex aromatic, until one friend described the scent beautifully as “it reminds me of summer camp”.

Mugwort stems are woody at the base, erect and brown to gray green. The soft leaves are variable – lower leaves are cleft, with the upper often being lance-shaped. The evenly-spaced leaves are green to gray green, lightly hairy on top, and white and woolly underneath. The foliage is used by some bees as nesting material.

Mugwort is in the aster family, Asteraceae. Flowers are not showy. They bloom from June to November on densely leafy spikes, emerging from the leaf axials. Flowers have small greenish heads and consist of disk flowers only (no ray flowers). Seeds are in tiny achenes, and are foraged by some birds.

Propagation is more commonly vegetative than by seed. Underground rhizomes create new sprouts, forming the colonies that are seen above ground.

The local Costanoan/Ohlone Indians had many medicinal uses for mugwort. A decoction of the plant was used in an external compress to treat rheumatism pain and wounds; a poultice was applied to the ear for earaches. Internally, a decoction of the plant was taken for asthma and urinary problems. In addition to these medicinal uses, branches were burned to smoke bees from nests or used as torches for night fishing.

Widely distributed in the western U.S., California mugwort prefers moist, shady soils, but will tolerate full sun and dry soils. Often found in drainages, it may aid in reducing erosion.

SOUTH SKYLINE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS ORGANIZATION (SSEPO) SEEKING VOLUNTEER GRANT WRITER  
Peggy Wargo  

We are seeking a volunteer Grant Writer to help us with researching and locating potential grants, submitting same and following up on grant applications through fulfillment. The tasks will also include public outreach and solicitations for general contributions through multiple resources. This is a potentially time consuming task and we are hoping to find a volunteer willing to provide their time and expertise to this worthy cause. For more information email Peggy Wargo at peggywargo.wargo1@gmail or call 650-839-3933.
Skyline Propane Users Group (SPUG) was formed to benefit SSA members. For information about joining, or for members wishing current information on the agreement, please contact Ruth Waldhauer at ruth.waldhauer3@gmail.com or 650-948-1466. Information is also available on our website: www.southskyline.org.

SSA has agreements with Amerigas, Kamps Propane, Suburban Propane, and FerrellGas. The open market price is about $1.00/gallon higher than the SPUG price. Prices are subject to change as frequently as wholesale prices change. The prices SSA posts are for the first of the month. Our SPUG rate is based on a keep-full basis, not will-call service.

You are not required to pay sales tax on propane if you do not have natural gas available where you use propane. If you get your propane from Amerigas, you will need to submit a sales tax exemption form. Contact Amerigas for the form.

Recent SPUG prices ($/gallon) are:

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<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Amerigas</th>
<th>Suburban San Jose</th>
<th>Suburban Scotts Valley</th>
<th>Kamps Propane</th>
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<td>1.97</td>
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<td>2.499</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>1.99</td>
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<td>1.29</td>
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Those whose SSA membership has lapsed will be disqualified from receiving the benefit of SPUG price for propane.

STRUGGLING TO STAY ON THE MOUNTAIN?

Are you, or a neighbor, challenged to stay on the mountain by temporary medical or health issues when a bit of help would tide you over? Our newish ALL VOLUNTEER ‘Mountain Neighbors Helping Neighbors’ (MNHN) nonprofit may be able to help you if you live in the general area between Skylonda in the north and Bear Creek Road in the south. Typical simple help we may be able to offer include a ride to a medical appointment, taking out the garbage for pickup, some help in the house, or stacking wood. Also, as a result of the spring defensible space free chipping by South Skyline FireSafe Council, we have arranged for some firewood saved for the needy if we can find a volunteer to saw and split it (hint, hint, to some potential chain sawer out there, and we have a log splitter available).

To get help please contact Patricia Wood, founder and leader of the “Mountain Neighbors Helping Neighbors” (MNHN), either by calling her, 408-333-4565, or emailing her, mnhn95033@gmail.com. A local volunteer will normally come visit you to figure how we can best help you. Do allow us a bit of time to get you some help. You can learn about us by visiting our website www.mnhn95033.org.

Patricia started the MNHN in the Summit Road area (mostly the other side of Rte 17) several years ago and we have been able to tag on with a growing group of volunteers in this Skyline area. We do need many more volunteers as our requests grow and before we are as effective we would like to be, so go to the above website or call Patricia for an application. Thank you!
SSEPO PRESIDENT’S CORNER

By Jerry Parsons, SSEPO President

The number of SSEPO articles in this issue of Skylines serves as evidence that your South Skyline Emergency Preparedness Organization (SSEPO) has been busy this past winter and spring! We started by asking ourselves “What does an emergency-prepared South Skyline Community look like?” This led us to three community layers:

1. Individual neighborhoods with their own emergency preparedness plans,
2. South Skyline Area “regional emergency support hubs” located at the MROSD Alpine Ranger Station and possibly at Las Cumbres, and
3. Tri-County emergency support in the counties we live in (San Mateo, Santa Cruz, and Santa Clara).

We are currently addressing emergency preparedness at all three community layers - expanded on in SSEPO articles elsewhere in this SKYLINES issue.

At layer (1) we are actively recruiting and supporting volunteers to develop neighborhood emergency preparedness plans.

At layer (2) we are seeking more medically trained community members who are willing to help out during emergencies. Also at layer (2) we are improving our Ham Radio communication links across the SSA area, including links with Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) to county emergency support.

At layer (3) we have organized the first ever meeting of all three county Office of Emergency Services (OES) offices participating to clarify communication and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) activation procedures including cross-county activations.

We thank all the volunteers who are working to make the South Skyline Area better prepared for emergencies. We hope you will join us in that effort!

SSEPO SEEKING VOLUNTEERS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Peggy Wargo

SouthSkyline Emergency Preparedness Organization (SSEPO) is recruiting “Neighborhood Coordinators” (NC) within local “neighborhoods” defined as groups of homes and residents that are in close proximity to each other. SSEPO provides training which helps NCs to work with members of their own community to develop an emergency preparedness plan tailored to their neighborhood. There are several successfully organized communities in the SSA area which can serve as models for newly organizing neighborhoods.

The NC provides, among other services, the following to their neighborhood:

• Helps organize emergency communications channels, processes, and procedures (phone trees for example)
• Works with neighbors to develop emergency preparedness procedures appropriate to their community
• Keeps neighbors up-to-date with training opportunities (local CERT classes, Red Cross training, local Ham Radio training, local exercises and “call out” training events)
• Interfaces with SSEPO’s board and provides updated support requirements and needs from residents
• Stays aware of local emergency equipment grants and funding opportunities for neighborhood equipment
• Supports neighborhood awareness of local emergency triage centers (currently located at the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District - Skyline Ranger Office site at 21150 Skyline Blvd. and planned for Las Cumbres Community Center at 19260 Las Cumbres Road)

SSEPO has loosely identified the following “neighborhoods” (from north to south):

• Langley Hill                     • Rocky Creek/Clouds Rest             • Portola/Alpine Road
• Castanea Ridge/Portola Heights  • Rosemary Lane                               • Heather Heights
• Hwy 9 adjacent to Skyline Blvd   • Indian Trail                                      • Las Cumbres
• Oakridge                        • Section of Skyline Blvd south of Oakridge to Bear Creek Rd

Some of our existing NCs, after years of service to our community, are asking to be replaced while others are asking for additional support.

If you’re interest is discussing an opportunity to become involved as a NC or to help support your existing neighborhood NC, please contact: Peggy Wargo - peggywargo.wargo1@gmail.com, 650-839-3933 (cell)
GIS MAPPING PROJECT

How to help First Responders get to you faster!

Peggy Wargo

A Geographic Information System (GIS) is a system that defines and maps geographic space by presenting geographical data in map format. It provides important information that could become vital to our safety, providing essential tools to emergency responses during events such as wildland fires or earthquakes. This information includes housing locations, water storage sources, evacuation routes, roadways in, out, and around a neighborhood, etc.

The current method that firefighters and other emergency responders use to locate our specific addresses is to refer to a paper-based map book carried on emergency vehicles. These maps are only as good as how updated the information in them is, and as with any paper system, that information becomes out of date the minute it is printed. In fact, these books of neighborhood maps can be as old as 10-15 years. These maps may not be as up-to-date as required when an emergency event takes place near your home! The solution is a real-time, automatically updating map that refreshes as our world changes. This current information must be immediately available to First Responders as they navigate their vehicles and resources to precise remote locations.

Local citizen groups are organizing in support of this project. These groups include La Honda Fire, SSEPO, SSA and others. La Honda Fire is seeking grant support from the Cal Fire SRA fee-funded grant program for the bulk of the project funding requirements, and from local organizations such as SSA and SSEPO; as well as direct contributions from local neighbors.

The local funds will be used to provide tablets and GIS mapping software for neighborhood GIS mapping data collection. The plan is to have each local area or “neighborhood” complete their data collection via interested and trained neighbors residing there (for example, those of you who have completed CERT training, or are a licensed Ham radio operator). Once the data collection has been completed, the equipment will be donated to the neighborhood’s First Responder fire department to be used on actual deployments.

Commencing data collection is planned for August after local neighborhood meetings are held to discuss the project in detail and the GIS mapping requirements. This project will require collecting data from residents’ property. The neighborhood meeting will provided detailed information about the data to be collected, how it is collected, and how is will be used. In order to collect the data and for each property to be included, the property owner permission will be requested for this activity. Without permission, the data will not be collected and only publically available data would be published.

Proposed Project Timeline:

July-August:  • Solicitation of donations (and ongoing grant applications)
  • Identify neighbors who will gather data (CERT, etc.)
  • Identification of neighborhoods for phase 1 rollout of data collection
  • Neighborhood meetings to discuss project scope and impact, obtain opt-in approval from neighbors

Sept-Dec:   • Software and Tablet training for data collectors (CERT, etc.)
  • Data collection in pilot neighborhoods
  • Identify and meet with phase 2 neighborhoods
  • Hold neighborhood meetings

Jan-Mar:    • Complete phase 2 neighborhoods and continue into other neighborhoods
  • Grant application funding request from CalFire SRA Grant program (funding for Tri-County information integration work and production of firefighter “strike-team” maps and kits (to be housed at local fire stations as firefighting tools)

Ongoing  • Complete targeted neighbors contacts
  • Providing ongoing maintenance and updates as needed and/or requested by neighbors
What can you do?
La Honda Fire, a 501(C3) organization, is accepting donations for this project. If you’d like to contribute to this project, please send donations to: La Honda Fire Brigade, PO Box 97, La Honda CA 94020
Please indicate that the purpose of your donation is restricted to: GIS Mapping project.

If there are any questions or if you would like to discuss this project, please contact one of the following individuals: Chief Ari Delay, La Honda Fire chief@lahondafire.org or Peggy Wargo, SouthCoast CERT Coordination peggywargo.wargo1@gmail.com

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY
by Jerry Peters

On Monday, April 27th, volunteers Doug Winslow, Ruth Waldhauer and Jerry Peters met at the Vista Point at 10 am to gather litter.

Shown left to right in photo are: Jerry Peters and Doug Winslow. Ruth Waldhauer took the photo.

SSA & SHS volunteers are responsible for gathering litter every two months. The sweep takes about an hour and a half. So far over 160 names are on the honor role listing those who have participated. We love getting new recruits. Please volunteer once. You will find it both rewarding and fun.

Jerry Peters is the new Coordinator of the Adopt-A-Highway project. Contact Jerry if you wish to volunteer. JPontheridge@gmail.com

PROJECT TO CREATE A SHADED FUEL BREAK ALONG ALPINE AND PORTOLA STATE PARK ROADS

Project Status Report, June 11, 2015
by Debra Born

In mid-May 2015 Santa Clara County FireSafe Council generously approved a grant to the South Skyline Fire-Safe Council (SSFSC) for creating a shaded fuel break along upper Alpine Road and Portola State Park Road. A shaded fuel break is a forest management strategy used for mitigating the threat of wildfire in areas where natural fire regimes have been suppressed, leading to a dangerous buildup of combustible vegetation. Constructing a shaded fuel break is the process of selectively thinning and removing more flammable understory vegetation while leaving the majority of larger, more fire tolerant tree species in place. The scope of work for the project will include clearing under-story brush, pruning trees, felling of dead and dying trees, chipping and scattering of cut material, and hauling of material as needed. Work will be limited to the right-of-way’s along Alpine and Portola State Park Roads. Work will begin at the corner of Highway 35 and Alpine Road and extend as far as 350 Portola State Park Road by the vineyard entrance as funding allows. The work will be divided into segments.

SSFSC plans to hire a local tree care contractor(s) from Santa Clara County’s list of approved contractors. As of mid-June a few contractors had been contacted and all were interested in the project.

Project Coordinator Debra Born met and exchanged emails with Brian Malone of Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) to establish criteria for clearing and disposing of material adjacent to MROSD property. She also discussed and received endorsement of the project from Mark Marelich of San Mateo County Roads Coastside Division as well as several neighbors.

An application for an Encroachment Permit was sent to the County in early June and a permit was anticipated within a week. The work plan is to begin in early July and with substantial completion by the end of August. The Request for Proposals, Contract Agreement, and Form of Proposal were released in early June.
SONIC BOMBARDMENT FROM SFO OVERFLIGHTS

As some residents of the Santa Cruz Mountains are very aware, March 5 of this year much changed in our quiet and peaceful space. The FAA rolled out NextGen but with it, they drastically and unnecessarily, changed flight routing over the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Flights have been rerouted on razor thin, highly concentrated paths over our homes. Virtually every San Francisco Airport inbound and most outbound flights to all southern California airports, many Oakland Airport outbound and now many San Jose Airport flights, are passing over many of us at low altitudes, forming a freeway in the sky. Even flights from airports such as Phoenix, Austin and Houston are flying over us now. In my flight tracing I have seen 1-2 minute intervals between flights for extended periods. You can see actual flights displayed with a 10 minute lag-time here: http://webtrak5.bksv.com/sjc3

What is NexGen?
• Multiyear project by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to revamp air traffic control (www.faa.gov/nextgen/)
• Key is moving navigation technology from ground based to satellite GPS
• Goal is to improve safety and efficiency from greater accuracy
• NextGen allows for highly concentrated traffic, potentially many more flights
• NOTHING in NexGen Technology REQUIRES highly concentrated lanes and the original recommendation was to keep “existing” flight paths for the same NextGen technology
• NextGen was rolled out in multiple cities across the nation with negative reviews over noise
• Phoenix neighborhoods have been blasted with constant, low flying take-offs since October 2014 and reacted to it with the City of Phoenix taking a lead and eventually suing the FAA.
• Implementation of NexGen lacked any community input from Santa Cruz County, nor was there any proper impact study done. FAA falsely claimed that impacts would be “minimal”.
• FAA has a reputation of taking inputs and doing studies for years until people exhaust. They refuse to re-direct traffic in the interim. (HINT: we need a political solution)

A study done by airline pilots in Santa Cruz (http://southskyline.org/wp-content/uploads/SERFR-ONE-May-2015.pdf) detailing impacts of the changes concluded:
• Average time savings over the former paths amounted to about 5.5 sec. (based on calculations) with fuel savings ~0.35 Gallons, (even the FAA said they would actually increase by 0.4% the first year.) this is a smoke screen to gain support.
• Higher altitude approaches were in keeping with normal operations and would further reduce impacts of noise.
• Spreading impacts would not unduly burden any particular neighborhood.
• Original recommendation for NexGen was to KEEP existing paths.

What can you do about it?
SFO has a department that records and reports noise complaints both in terms of numbers of complaints and persons filing them. They take them by phone or by website: www.flysfo.com/community-environment/noise-abatement/file-a-complaint
The most efficient way to use this site is to file your first complaint online and tick the “First time” box as well as requesting follow up email response. The follow up email response will include a “caller code” which will identify you for future complaints. Each full online report is ONE complaint regardless of the duration recorded. However, multiple flights can be recorded in a single email once you have your caller code by putting that code, and the date in the email title and body, then list the individual flight times along with optional comments. Each incident is recorded as a complaint. Numbers of complaints matter when pressing for either a political solution or through litigation.

Support political efforts to reverse the changes - county and city government officials need to hear from you to support their efforts on a federal level to bring about change. Your Congresspersons and Senators need to hear directly from you as well.

There are a number of other organizations that have formed. In Santa Cruz County Save Our Skies Santa Cruz (www.sossantacruz.org) has organized and is an excellent source of information joining organizations such as www.skypossepaloalto.org/ and broader umbrella groups on airport noise. Join online forums such as Nextdoor.com or various Yahoo Groups to share information.

CAMPSITE FIRE RISK REDUCED AT CASTLE ROCK

By Eric Isacson

Many of us have been concerned for years that State Parks allows campfires in the Trail Camp in Castle Rock State Park (CRSP). It is located about a mile off Highway 35 below the Los Altos Rod and Gun Club. The campsites were created some 40 years ago by trimming back bushes to make small clearings in a field of dense chaparral with a sparse knobcone pine overstory. A fire ring was installed in each. Over the decades the vegetation has steadily grown back to such an extent that the campsites now feel claustrophobic - and pose risks that a campfire could easily ignite vegetation overhead.

Earlier this year the Sempervirens Fund generously made a $5,000 donation to the South Skyline Fire Safe Council (SSFSC) to be used to mitigate wildfire risks within CRSP. Initially we considered using it to install an initial attack water tank for Calfire use in a remote part of the Park to resupply fire engines fighting fires like the 2008 Castle Fire. After further consultation with Calfire, Sempervirens and State Parks we decided to use it instead to help reduce the risk of a fire starting in the Trail Camp.

State Parks was using California Conservation Corps (CCC) crews to cut and chip the vegetation around each of the campsites. The CCC crews were paid out of the Emergency Drought Relief Program signed by the governor last year. However once they started work they found that there were far more chips than could be disposed of on-site, even with scattering them on pathways. Therefore the SSFSC stepped in and used the $5,000 Sempervirens Fund grant to pay for hauling away and disposing of 240 yards (8 dumpster loads) of chips.

The result is that the risk of a fire starting in the Trail Camp is significantly reduced. In addition the service road to the Camp has also been cleared facilitating access for fighting any fire (should one occur there) and to several large water tanks.

www.southskylinefiresafe.org
NATURE NOTES

**BLACKTAIL DEER (Odocoileus hemionus subsp. Columbianus)**

These are the large eared deer that you see browsing through your garden, alongside the roads, and all along the Pacific coast.

- Some people call them Mule Deer but these local deer are actually a subspecies of Mule Deer called Columbian Blacktail Deer. Although recent DNA research suggests that it was the mating of Whitetail does and Blacktail bucks that gave rise to the Mule Deer rather than the opposite.
- The bucks drop their antlers between January and March. Antlers on the forest floor provide a source of calcium and other nutrients to other forest inhabitants. Bucks re-grow their antlers beginning in April through to August.
- Females usually give birth to two fawns (triplets are possible), although if it is their first time having a baby they often only have one. The gestation period is 6 or 7 months with fawns being born in May and June.

**PEREGRINE FALCONS**

*Georgia Stigall*

Based on hearing and seeing peregrine recently this is one of my random reminders to be watching for peregrine falcons and golden eagles. We’ve been hearing and seeing peregrines almost daily; their unique calls really announce their presence! Seeing a golden eagle less often but at least monthly.

Equally fun to watch are the California quail chicks that are out and about, red-shouldered hawks and western bluebirds. Several others as well.

To hear the sounds of the peregrine falcon: [www.soundboard.com/sb/Peregrine_Falcon_sound](http://www.soundboard.com/sb/Peregrine_Falcon_sound). Click on North American species for our locals. Many of us have been able to determine who we’re hearing (besides the obvious great-horned) by listening to the sound files on the owling site. There’s also the local-local Sequoia Audubon Society on-line field guide at [http://birding.sequoia-audubon.org](http://birding.sequoia-audubon.org) and the Natural Resources Database ([www.nrdb.org](http://www.nrdb.org)) covers species of flora and fauna for virtually all parks and preserves in our region.

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**ALBINO REDWOODS?**

*Dawn Fluharty*

You may already be familiar with albinism in humans and other animals, but did you know there are albino plants, too? The most viable example of this phenomenon is the albino redwood. Due to a genetic mutation, these rare plants are unable to produce chlorophyll, leaving their needles white or pale yellow instead of the typical green.

Read more and see photos at: [http://www.mnn.com/earth-matters/wilderness-resources/blogs/the-mysterious-world-of-albino-redwood-trees#ixzz3d9kI0bfmg](http://www.mnn.com/earth-matters/wilderness-resources/blogs/the-mysterious-world-of-albino-redwood-trees#ixzz3d9kI0bfmg)
KINGS CREEK TRUCK TRAIL EXTENDED TO HIGHWAY 9

By Eric Isacson

The Kings Creek Truck Trail (KCTT) provides a critical route for firefighting access to some of the most remote wildland areas of the South Skyline area including the natural preserve in Castle Rock State Park. After it had become overgrown and unusable due to many year’s lack of vegetation maintenance the SSFSC (South Skyline Fire Safe Council) in 2011 obtained $100,000 in grants and managed the re-opening of its uppermost 4 miles beginning at Highway 35. This was accomplished by removing dense vegetation to create a reduced fuel zone along its length.

This spring the SSFSC obtained funding from the SRA Fee we pay as part of our property taxes and from State watershed protection funds and used it to perform maintenance of the reduced fuel zone along the uppermost 4 miles of the KCTT by removing newly sprouted vegetation threatening to obstruct the KCTT again in short order. Most of the work was performed by Calfire Fire Crews. We are committed to perform this maintenance every Spring as long as we able to raise enough money to do so. This year’s maintenance had a commercial value of approximately $20,000 but we were able do it for less than $2,000 by using inmate crews, SRA fee funds, watershed protection funds and local contributions. The work was supervised by SSA volunteers.

The KCTT originally extended all the way to Highway 9 at the foot of the Saratoga Toll Road below Waterman Gap. Little or no vegetation or drainage maintenance had been done on the last 3 miles since the Semprevirens Fund and State Parks acquired the land 15 years ago. That section had become so overgrown with small trees and brush that even a backhoe attempting to maintain drainage features couldn’t find them. Working with the California Conservation Corps, the SSFSC obtained a grant from Proposition 40 watershed protection funds to re-open this important link in the fire trails network. We supplemented this with funds from the SRA Fee we pay as part of our taxes. The work was performed by CCC crews and by Calfire Fire Crews. The job turned out to be so big that 34 days, nearly 2 months, of crew time was required to complete the job. The project was managed and supervised by SSFSC and SSA volunteers.

The commercial value of this of re-opening the Lower KCTT would likely approach $100,000. We were able to do it for a fraction of that by putting together funds from several sources, using inexpensive Fire Crews for part of the job and with volunteer help from SSA residents who had completed or renewed Calfire/CDCR sponsor training.

More than 60 days of volunteer time was put in to plan, organize and sponsor and supervise the project. Special thanks to the following people for helping out: Bill Guenther, Ed Hayes, Ron Chandik, Kim Hamilton, Karl Noonan (of Vajrapani) and the SSFSC board of directors.

We can feel a little safer from the threat of wildfires originating in the wildlands below us now that the KCTT is open for fighting fires and emergency escape all the way between Highway 35 and the San Lorenzo Valley. A 4WD vehicle is highly recommended as there a few rough or steep spots.

www.southskylinefiresafe.org
IMPROVED ACCESS TO POPULAR TRAIL SYSTEM AT RUSSIAN RIDGE OPEN SPACE PRESERVE

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) in partnership with Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) held a public grand opening celebration on Thursday, May 7, for the Ancient Oaks Trail extension at Mindego Gateway, Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve. This new one-mile trail extension connects the Mindego Gateway parking lot and facilities to the very popular Russian Ridge trail system, creating a four-mile loop that includes spectacular vistas and shaded woodlands.

The Mindego Gateway, which opened last year, is located in La Honda on Alpine Road, 1.4 miles west of Skyline Boulevard. The site features 20 parking spots, tiered viewing platforms, including a wheelchair-accessible terrace, that offer sweeping views of protected peaks and ridgelines. From this landing point, hikers, bikers and horseback riders can take the new Ancient Oaks Trail extension to the Russian Ridge trail system, which includes the Bay Area Ridge Trail, Alpine Pond and magnificent 360-degree views from Borel Hill.

The Mindego Hill area, with its abundant wildlife and natural water sources has been populated since 500 A.D., beginning with the Ohlone Native Americans, but is named for its first non-native settler, Juan Mendico, a Basque rancher who settled there in 1859.

The extension of the Ancient Oaks Trail is the final phase of the POST-funded Mindego Gateway Project, that helped finance the acquisition and protection of the stunning 1,047-acre Mindego Ranch and the distinct natural landmark of Mindego Hill, along with the 97-acre Silva property that is home to the Mindego Gateway.

For more information about the Ancient Oaks Trail or the Mindego Gateway at the Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve, visit www.openspace.org/preserves or call 650-691-1200.
PORTOLA HEIGHTS COMMUNITY ROADS CLEARING PROJECT HELPS PROTECT WATERSHED

by Mark Haynie and Eric Isacson

Portola Heights is a private community of approximately 30 homes located about halfway between Page Mill Rd. and Highway 9. Residents depend on a network of approximately 20 miles of roads on private and MROSD lands for access and emergency escape. By 2014 some of the roads had become unsafe or unusable either for fire engines or as emergency escape routes by residents due to encroaching and overhanging vegetation. Volunteer residents and CCC crews worked together to create the first shaded fuel break along primary and fire roads since the community was subdivided over 40 years ago.

Last year two residents, Mark Haynie and Bill Guenther, working with the South Skyline Fire Safe Council (SSFSC) and MROSD, contacted the California Conservation Corps (CCC) for help in clearing the roads of the obstructing vegetation. The local CCC office was able to approve the use of Proposition 40 watershed protection funds for CCC crews to do the work. This together with private donations enabled the primary and emergency roads to be cleared of excess vegetation and to create shaded fuel breaks.

The environmental clearance required for use of the CCC crews was provided by MROSD. They benefited from the project by getting improved access to their land holdings in the area.

The project entailed more than 2200 person-hours from 4 CCC crews, more than 500 hours of volunteer time from Portola Heights residents within a 30-day period. CCC crews worked up to 10 hours a day trimming trees (to a height of 8 ft), clearing brush (25ft from roadways), removing trees that had succumbed to sudden oak death, and trimming forest underbrush.

The Portola Heights community is a significant part of the 70 square mile Pescadero Creek watershed. Following a wildfire and rainfall runoff, the area has the potential to negatively impact downstream steelhead trout and coho salmon populations from sedimentation of gravel bars where they reproduce. This project has made an important contribution to reducing that risk and helping to protect these fish.

www.southskylinefiresafe.org
Pancakes

Thanks to everyone who attended our pancake breakfast over Memorial Day weekend! We had a good turnout and it was a big success.

It was also a beautiful day to introduce the George Johnson memorial bench, crafted by Bill Sorich. It is placed on the hillside between the garage and the barracks. We recycled some redwood for two planters, and Sarah Glover brought in the plants.

New Volunteers

We have two new volunteers as of May 6. They have already started responding to incidents, and we will be putting them in the spotlight in future editions.

We are still looking to expand the team. If you are interested, please contact us. You can find a complete description of the volunteer program on our website, http://southskylinefire.org.

DEFENSIBLE SPACE CHIPPING FOR HOMES

By Eric Isacson

The “2015 Spring Free Chipping Program” was a big success! Nearly 800 yards of vegetation was chipped helping to create defensible space around a dozen homes. The program was partially funded by a $5,000 grant from the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors. A big thank you to our Supervisor Bruce McPherson for supporting it. And thanks to Ed Hayes for managing the program with help from Bill Guenther.

The South Skyline Fire Safe Council (SSFSC) plans to offer the program again this Fall, pending identification of funds to pay for it. The dates have not yet been set.

2015 FALL FREE CHIPPING PROGRAM

SOUTH SKYLINE FIRE SAFE COUNCIL IS OFFERING FREE BRUSH CHIPPING FOR DEFENSIBLE FIRE SAFE CLEARING AND FUEL REDUCTION AROUND INDIVIDUAL HOMEOWNERS’ PROPERTY.

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Home must exist within the SSFSC Boundaries
- Brush piles must be orderly and within proximity of good access for chipper
- Brush piles must be available for inspection one week in advance of chipping date
- Chipping is for existing homes only, No new construction or area clearing

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE www.southskylinefiresafe.org

FOR APPLICATIONS AND POLICY RULES PLEASE CONTACT ED HAYES EMAIL: edhayes@wildblue.net PHONE: 408-872-1715

The program consists of the SSFSC arranging to bring in a commercial chipping contractor to chip vegetation that homeowners have removed from an area within 100 feet of their homes. Please start planning now to reduce vegetation around your homes to provide the required 100 feet defensible space clearance.
CLASSIFIED ADS

Due to many requests, we will attempt to keep a list of ads that will run every issue. However, there is no guarantee that an ad won’t be missed because of our changes in staff. If you want be on the list, you must make a request to “run until canceled”. It is best to resubmit ads for each issue. Send to: skylineseditor@yahoo.com Please keep ads to 45 words or less.


Set of Four Procomp Mud Terrain Tires For Sale: size 32 X 11.50 X 15 three are mounted on rims that fit older Jeeps and Ford Broncos & half-ton trucks 70’ to mid 90’s. Tires have lots of tread left. Also have same size BFG Mud Terrain spare tire $300 or B/O. Also have 4 rims off 90’s Jeep for sale $80 or B/O 415-717-0524.

Waterless Pedicures and Manicures in the privacy of your home. Specializing in debridement of thickened discolored nails and removal of severe callous build-up. Artificial nails applied on request. Experience with Acrylic, gel, Shellac and all soak off gels. California Licensed & Certified. 25+years - local references. Email: nailsolutions2012@gmail.com

Barbara & John Mountain Realtors: We live in the mountains. We love the mountains. You set the pace. We make it easy. John Harriman (C) 408-332-4780 Barbara Harriman (C) 408-656-8209 John.Harriman@cbnorcal.com Barbara.Harriman@cbnorcal.com Check out our testimonials! www.TheHarrimanTeam.com

Skyline Broadband Service offering high-speed wireless Internet with speeds up to 25 Mbps in much of our 500-square-mile coverage area. http://SkylineBroadbandService.com phone: 650-917-9279

Free Fire Fitting for those in the South Skyline Fire & Rescue primary response area. This fitting will allow the connection of a fire hose to your water supply and can be utilized by the fire department to access the water necessary for fire suppression. Please visit http://southskylinefire.org/ for more information under the “Help us help you” section.

Learning Strategies: One-on-one tutoring in your home by qualified educators. K-12, all subject areas including test prep ISEE, HSPT, SSAT & SAT, Contact Learning Strategies, www.creative-learning-strategies.com or email victori-askinner@creative-learning-strategies.com or call 650-747-9651 for a free phone consultation.

Russian Ridge Winery: 919 Washington Street, San Carlos. Award winning wines, many Santa Cruz Mountains varietals. Tasting room opens Fridays 5-9 pm and Saturdays/Sundays 12-5 pm.

Award Winning Dog Training Classes: Saturdays in Portola Valley/Ladera & in Atherton at the lovely Holbrook Palmer Park weekday evenings. NEW class! AKC Urban Canine. (for ‘CGC dogs) Private Lessons available Please call 650 851-5500

Ads are free to SSA members. Membership is $15 per year. Membership forms are available at www.southskyline.org Please limit each ad to 45 words. Ads will be shortened when space is limited. Email ads to: Skylineseditor@yahoo.com
Consider Getting
Your Skylines by Email

For those members who receive the Skylines through the Post Office please consider the option to receive it on-line. This will save paper as well as postage. If you sign up for this option you will be notified by email when the next issues is released. Sign up and update your email address with Ruth Waldhauer at: ruth.waldhauer3@gmail.com or 650-948-1466

Those members who live locally where we stuff mail boxes will continue to get a paper copy.

SSA Calendar - General Meeting

August 9 (Sunday) Jaqua Ranch
Business meetings will be held at 7:30pm
  July 9, 7:30 - Michael/Kristen
  September 10, 7:30 - TBD
  October 8, 7:30 - Larry
  November 12, 7:00 - Marianne

President Michael Rowe
408-872-1775

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The deadline for submitting ads and articles for the next issue is September 15, 2015
Send all ads and articles to: SkylinesEditor@yahoo.com,  We reserve the right to edit all submissions.
We assume no responsibility for omissions, incorrect information or personal opinions.