



The San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy preserves, protects and shares the natural and cultural resources of the San Dieguito River Valley through collaborative efforts to acquire lands, complete trails, restore habitats, establish educational programs, create interpretive centers, encourage recreation, and mobilize public support.

# 2016-17 annual report



Cover photo by Aaron Chang



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



As I begin my tenure as President of the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy, I've been reflecting on our organization's mission—to preserve, protect, and share natural and cultural resources of the San Dieguito River Valley. As a (nearly) lifelong resident of North County, I've seen the region's tremendous change firsthand. Just imagine how different it would look without groups like the Conservancy, our partners, and fellow environmental nonprofits working to preserve and protect our open spaces.

In my short time on the Board, I've seen the Conservancy grow in leaps and bounds—it seems every few months our team is launching new recreation programming, making progress on a habitat restoration project, or expanding outreach and awareness

efforts. It's exciting to see new people discover the River Park and Conservancy through a Citizen Science event, Watershed Explorers, Trails & Ales, or Yoga at the Birdwing.

Right now, we're focused on building on this momentum as we push to make significant progress on completing the Coast to Crest Trail. **We have reached this point, thanks to your support.** I'm excited to see what we accomplish in 2017 and beyond.

Sincerely,

*Brad Bartlett*

Brad Bartlett, President

THANK YOU FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



This year was filled with many accomplishments that could not have been achieved without the support of our members! It is your contributions of funds and hands-on volunteer labor that have enabled the Conservancy to continue its conservation, education and recreation programs, throughout the San Dieguito River Valley.

Led by Conservation Manager, Jess Norton, we wrapped up our restoration project at San Dieguito Lagoon Pond. This area will continue to be stewarded by volunteers during regular events. We received additional funding from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to continue the habitat restoration project at Fairbanks Ranch, whose residents actively participate to ensure the success of this project.

Our army of Citizen Scientists, led by our experts, collected data on Bernardo Mountain and Volcan Mountain. The results of this work are provided to a regional monitoring group assessing the ecological health of the region.

Jack Hughes joined the Conservancy as our Watershed Explorers Program Volunteer Coordinator, funded by an Opening the Outdoors grant from the San Diego Foundation. He hit the ground running and we have 15 new volunteer Watershed Explorers Educators to assist us in the implementation of this nature education program.

The Pamo Valley Segment of the Coast to Crest Trail is nearing construction as we close out this year. The Conservancy continues to fund the efforts of the San Dieguito River Park JPA to open this segment to the public.

Our outreach efforts, such as Exec Treks, Hidden Hikes, Yoga at the Birdwing, Furry Friends Hikes, and Trails and Ales were filled to capacity and the popular Exploring Our Sense of Place program, continues to gain traction and attract new members.

Thank you for all that you do to keep the Conservancy vibrant and relevant as we enter our 31<sup>st</sup> Year!

Sincerely,

*Trish Boaz*

Trish Boaz, Executive Director

2016-2017 AT A GLANCE

IN TOTAL, THE CONSERVANCY...

**76** Hosted or participated in 76 Conservation, education, recreation, and outreach events

Received grant funds **\$111,600**



TRAINED

**15**

Volunteer Watershed Educators

**6** Volunteer Hike Leaders and Hike Assistants

Citizen Scientists **19**

Raised through River Valley Fest and Wax & Wine (net) **\$74,000**



Received Top-Rated Nonprofit recognition from Great Nonprofits and Platinum recognition from GuideStar

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTION

**\$157,321**



WE'D LIKE TO THANK OUR FINANCIAL PARTNERS, CONSERVATION PARTNERS, AND CORPORATE SPONSORS FOR THEIR SUPPORT:

Financial Partners

Rancho Santa Fe Foundation  
The San Diego Foundation  
Union Banc Investment Services  
Union Bank

Conservation Partners

22nd District Agricultural Association  
California Native Plant Society - San Diego Chapter  
City of Del Mar  
City of Escondido  
City of Poway  
City of San Diego  
City of Solana Beach  
Coastal Community Foundation  
County of San Diego  
Del Mar Fairgrounds  
The Escondido Creek Conservancy  
Fairbanks Ranch Association  
Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley  
High Tech Elementary North County  
High Tech High North County  
I Love a Clean San Diego  
Malk Nature Fund  
Mission Resource Conservation District  
Natural Resource Conservation Service  
Palomar Audubon Society  
Rancho Santa Fe Association  
Rincon Consultants, Inc.  
San Diego Archaeological Society  
San Diego Audubon Society  
San Diego Canyonlands  
San Diego Coastkeeper  
San Diego Management & Monitoring Program  
San Diego Mountain Biking Association  
San Diego Tracking Team  
San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research  
San Dieguito River Park JPA  
San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy  
Sierra Club San Diego - North County Group  
The Solana Beach Fund  
Southwestern Field Herping Associates  
US Fish & Wildlife Service Coastal Program  
US Geological Survey  
US Fish & Wildlife Service Partners for Fish & Wildlife  
Volcan Mountain Foundation

Corporate Sponsors

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Edison International  
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REI  
SDG&E  
Snooze, an A.M. Eatery



## CONSERVATION

We partnered with the San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority (JPA), and other agencies to strategically and sustainably combat invasives and restore habitat throughout the San Dieguito Watershed. Our current habitat restoration projects are located at:



Bernardo Mountain



Crest Canyon



Lagoon Pond  
(adjacent to the San Dieguito  
Lagoon/Estuary complex)



Fairbanks Ranch



Del Dios Gorge



San Pasqual Valley



Santa Ysabel Gorge

## MAJOR VOLUNTEER RESTORATION EVENTS/PROJECTS

### CONSERVANCY HOSTED 10 EVENTS INCLUDING:



#### Coastal Cleanup Day with I Love a Clean San Diego (9/17/16)

- 8 sites around San Dieguito Lagoon, co-hosted by the Conservancy, San Dieguito River Park JPA, SDG&E, 22<sup>nd</sup> District Agricultural Association, and AECOM-The Conservancy hosted Crest Canyon & River Path Del Mar sites
- 130 volunteers
- 120 pounds of trash removed
- Invasive plant removal
- Installed native plants



#### Trail Restoration at Bernardo Mountain Summit Trail (4/15/17)

- Partnered with REI, San Dieguito River Park JPA, and San Diego Mountain Biking Association
- 35 volunteers completed trail restoration work at the Bernardo Mountain Summit Trailhead
- Funded by \$10,000 grant from REI
- Dedicated to memory of Keith Quigley, avid mountain biker and REI employee who died in a car accident in fall 2016



#### Creek to Bay Cleanup at Crest Canyon with I Love a Clean San Diego (4/22/17)

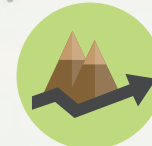
- 22 volunteers
- 15 pounds of trash removed
- 150 pounds of ice plant removed from restoration area

## EDUCATION

We continued to grow our Citizen Science Monitoring Program under the leadership of Conservation Manager Jess Norton, and partnered with the San Dieguito River Park JPA, Volcan Mountain Foundation, and the San Diego Archaeological Center to develop the Watershed Explorers Program. Jack Hughes was hired as our Volunteer/Docent Coordinator for the Watershed Explorers Program and hit the ground running to grow the program.

## CITIZEN SCIENCE

We wrapped up our 2016 surveys on Bernardo Mountain and kicked off 2017 with surveys on Volcan Mountain.



#### Bernardo Mountain Data

- 6 surveys conducted
- 232 acres covered
- 12 new citizen scientists
- 202 plant species recorded
- 92 wildlife species recorded
- 5 invertebrates
- 10 mammals
- 70 birds
- 7 reptiles



#### Volcan Mountain Data (in progress)

- 5 surveys completed so far
- 114 acres covered
- 7 new citizen scientists



#### Other Citizen Science Facts

- 457 total citizen scientists since program began in fall 2014
- 26 surveys
- 49 Junior Citizen Scientists from High Tech Elementary North County conducted a "Critters on Camera" research project: reviewing wildlife photos, collected data on species occurrences, and
- 165 Rincon Middle School 6<sup>th</sup> graders reviewed wildlife camera photos

More information about the Citizen Science Monitoring Program, including updated results, can be found at [www.sdrvc.org/sdrvc1\\_citizenscience1.html](http://www.sdrvc.org/sdrvc1_citizenscience1.html).

## WATERSHED EXPLORERS



The Watershed Explorers Program consists of five interactive field trips to different sites within the San Dieguito Watershed:

- Volcan Mountain
- Lake Sutherland
- San Diego Archaeological Center
- Sikes Adobe Historic Farmstead
- Birdwing Open Air Classroom at the San Dieguito Lagoon
- Field trips are appropriate for youth in grades 5-12.



#### Watershed Explorers Highlights

- Hosted 101 students
- 1 new volunteer coordinator hired
- 15 volunteer Watershed Educators trained to host field trips

More information about the Watershed Explorers Program can be found at [www.watershedexplorers.org](http://www.watershedexplorers.org).



## RECREATION

Our varied recreation programming continued to grow. We're seeing progress towards our ultimate goal of completing the Coast to Crest Trail on segments at Santa Fe Valley, Lusardi Creek, Osuna Valley, Pamo Valley, and Santa Ysabel.

### RECREATION BY THE NUMBERS

The Conservancy hosted **28** events total:



Trails & Ales has recently wrapped up its third round, and we're planning to expand the series in the fall.



Dog owners love sharing the trails with their pets. We collect food/treat donations for the Helen Woodward Animal Center at our Furry Friends Hikes.



Hikers braved wind, rain, and low temps for this year's Valentine's on Volcan—the wine and picnic at the summit was well-deserved!



Family-friendly Full Moon Hikes typically attract 30-60 hikers eager for a unique look at the River Park in moonlight.



We recruited 6 new Hike Assistants and Leaders—all eager to introduce more people to the River Park!



Who doesn't love outdoor yoga? Yoga instructor Susan McCrea continues to lead our monthly yoga sessions at the Birdwing.



### EXPLORING OUR SENSE OF PLACE

We celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> year of our popular Exploring Our Sense of Place (ESP) program, that allows participants to experience the San Dieguito River Valley in all seasons, to follow its path from mountain to sea, to encounter plant, animal and human inhabitants, and to connect to the River Valley with their heart and minds. The ESP program is an 8-session seminar series that includes a reception, 7 excursions with lectures by experts, and special "reflection time." 25 people participated in ESP last year and we anticipate a sold out series again in 2017-2018.

## OUTREACH, AWARENESS, AND FINANCIALS

Awareness of the Conservancy and our work in the River Park continues to spread throughout the County. We hosted and presented a wide variety of talks and events in 2016-2017, ranging from a rattlesnake safety class to in-class presentations at High Tech High North County to co-hosting a DMF Talks event with ECOLIFE Conservation Founder Bill Toone.



### OUTREACH HIGHLIGHTS

- The Conservancy held, hosted, or participated in 23 total outreach events
- Executive Director Trish Boaz was named a finalist for San Diego Business Journal's Women Who Mean Business Award in November 2016 and awarded a Sun Catcher Award from San Diego EarthWorks in May 2017.
- The Conservancy honored popular Hike Leader and San Diego County Parks Attendant Bill Augustus at the North County Philanthropy Council's Volunteer Awards Luncheon in November 2016.
- Past President Peter Shapiro was profiled in 92067 Magazine.
- The Conservancy was recognized as a 2016 Top-Rated Nonprofit by Great Nonprofits, a leading provider of reviews and ratings of nonprofits throughout the US
- The Conservancy was recognized as a Platinum Participant by GuideStar, the world's largest source of information on nonprofit organizations

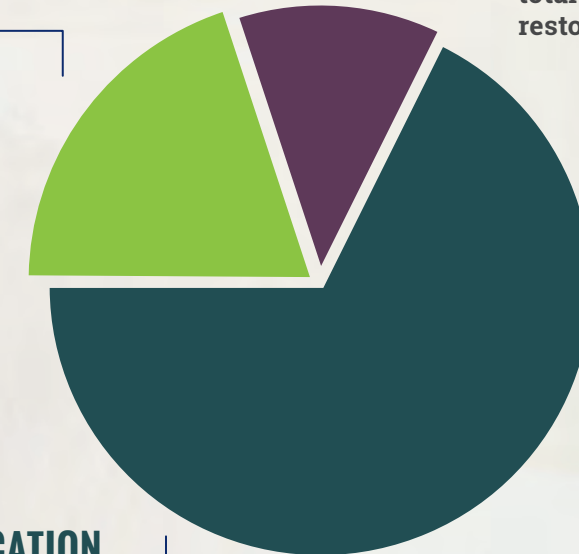
## GRANT FUNDING

**RECREATION**  
\$30,000  
for River Path Del Mar



### CONSERVATION

**\$15,300**  
total in grants for our habitat restoration project at Fairbanks Ranch



### EDUCATION

**\$66,300**  
total in grants for the Watershed Explorers Program and Watershed Explorers Experiences



Michael and Paula Rantz Foundation



Summer 2017



San Dieguito River Valley Land Conservancy  
3030 Bunker Hill Street, Ste. 309-1  
San Diego, CA 92109  
858.755.6956

[www.sdrvc.org](http://www.sdrvc.org)

*Your support provides for*

- **Conservation**
- **Education**
- **Recreation**

*in the San Dieguito River Valley Park*



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The San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to accelerating the development of recreational multi-use trails in the 92,000-acre San Dieguito River Park, preserving and restoring native ecosystems, and educating the public about our precious natural resources.

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
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River Valley Fest 2017

# *Coast to Crest* ~ and Beyond ~

**October 8, 2017**

4:00 - 8:00 pm

**Fairbanks Ranch Country Club**  
15150 San Dieguito Rd. | Rancho Santa Fe

**Reservations | \$150 per person**  
**R.S.V.P. by October 1, 2017**  
**[sdrvc.org/rivervalleyfest](http://sdrvc.org/rivervalleyfest)**

Save the Date