



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.

2018-19 annual report



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Your Conservancy has marched forward during this past year, with continued success in preserving, protecting, and restoring the San Dieguito River watershed. The Conservancy is so fortunate to have a dedicated and hard working staff, Board of Directors, and Advisory Board. But none of the Conservancy's efforts could happen without the generosity of our members and donors.

The Conservancy's many accomplishments for this past year are highlighted in this Annual Report. One of the most satisfying accomplishments was completion of a three-mile segment of the Coast to Crest trail at Pamo Valley, which was the result of eight years of steady effort.

To improve the health and preservation of the watershed, we are engaged in projects to remove invasive species and engage local students. Through citizen science projects and watershed curriculum, we hope to inspire these young people to be future protectors of this important resource.

Now, we look forward to future projects and challenges. The Conservancy will attempt to acquire 103 acres of land overlooking Lake Hodges for preservation. This property is currently on the market for development, but is within the view shed of the Coast to Crest Trail and contains sensitive wildlife habitat. Moving forward will require significant donor support and critical private and public partnerships.

Additionally, there is a critical gap in the Coast to Crest Trail, located at the east end of the Surf Cup leasehold. The current planned segment will go through property owned by City of San Diego and leased to Fairbanks Ranch. If the right of way is acquired to develop this segment, the River Park JPA will apply for grant funding, but a significant matching contribution will be required. The Conservancy intends to support this effort as much as possible.

We move into this coming year with great anticipation and optimism, thanks to your continued support. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Brad Bartlett, President

Make your River Valley Fest reservations at
sdrvrivervalleyfest2019.eventbrite.com.

THANK YOU FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Thanks to the support of our members and other donors, the Conservancy made huge strides in its conservation, education, and recreation programs. Our hard work paid off in high impact projects highlighted below. We are excited to share more about these important projects in this annual report!

- Implemented invasive control and restoration projects at Bernardo Mountain, Brigantine Basin in Del Mar, Clevenger Canyon North, Gonzales Canyon in the City of San Diego, Fairbanks Ranch, the Del Dios Gorge, Rancho Santa Fe, River Path Del Mar, and San Pasqual Valley
- Created an Education Strategy to create stewards of the San Dieguito Watershed that are educated, empowered, and engaged
- Reached over 600 youth throughout San Diego through our Watershed Explorers, Field Ecology, Pollinator's Paradise and Citizen Science programs
- Celebrated the completion of the three-mile Pamo Valley segment of the Coast to Crest Trail with the San Dieguito River Park JPA, made possible by donations from Conservancy supporters
- Funded the efforts of the City of Del Mar to complete the studies and engineering plans for Phase 3 of the River Path Del Mar.

Your support is what makes these programs, projects, and activities possible! You are making a commitment to protect the San Dieguito River Valley and create a legacy. We look forward to another year of many accomplishments in the San Dieguito River Valley together!

Sincerely,

Trish Boaz, Executive Director

2018-2019 AT A GLANCE

IN TOTAL, THE CONSERVANCY...

124 Hosted or participated in 124 Conservation, education, recreation, and outreach events

- 14 conservation events
- 55 education events
- 20 recreation events
- 35 outreach events

Raised through fundraising events, including River Valley Fest and Wax & Wine

\$107,000+



\$116,313 Grants Awarded



Total Donations **\$385,000**



778 Supporters



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

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

Financial Partners

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

Conservation Partners

22nd District Agricultural Association
Allied Climbers of San Diego
California Fire Safe Council
California Native Plant Society - San Diego Chapter
California Marine Protected Areas
City of Del Mar
City of Escondido
City of Poway
City of San Diego
City of Solana Beach
Climate Science Alliance South Coast
County of San Diego
Del Mar Foundation
Fairbanks Ranch Association
Friends of Balboa Park
Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley
Helen Woodward Animal Center
High Tech Elementary North County
High Tech High North County
High Tech Middle North County
Hike San Diego
Historic Rancho Santa Fe
I Love a Clean San Diego
Living Coast Discovery Center
Mission Resource Conservation District
Ms. Smarty-Plants
National Charity League, San Dieguito Chapter
National Resources Conservation Service
Nature Collective
Outdoor Outreach
Palomar Audubon Society
Rancho Santa Fe Association
Rancho Santa Fe / Fairbanks Ranch Fire Safe Council
Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District
Reality Changers
Rincon
San Diego Archaeological Center
San Diego Audubon Society
San Diego Coastkeeper
San Diego Canyonlands
San Diego Mountain Biking Association
San Diego Natural History Museum
San Diego Tracking Team
San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research
San Dieguito River Park JPA
Ship in the Woods
Sierra Club San Diego - North County Group
Skyhunters
Southwestern Field Herping Associates
State Coastal Conservancy
The Escondido Creek Conservancy
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Urban Corps of San Diego
Volcan Mountain Foundation
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CONSERVATION

We partnered other agencies and organizations to strategically and sustainably combat invasives and restore habitat throughout the San Dieguito Watershed. Conservation Manager Jonathan Appelbaum leads our habitat restoration projects and works with our partners to bring the most effective scientific methods and tools to our conservation and field research projects.

Our current habitat restoration projects are located at:



Fairbanks Ranch

Invasive species removal; highlighted in Winter 2019 issue of "Flora," published by California Native Plant Society



San Pasqual Valley

Invasive species removal and riparian habitat restoration to begin in Fall 2019



Gonzales Canyon

Invasive species removal, planting natives, trail maintenance and improvements, and establishing a native species demonstration garden



Brigantine Basin

Invasive species removal and planting natives to mitigate impacts of sea level rise



Clevenger Canyon North

Graffiti removal and trailhead/staging area cleanup and beautification

NEXT TO NATURE PROGRAM



We partnered with Heaviland Landscape Management to launch our "Next to Nature" Program in October 2018 to encourage homeowners and businesses, especially those that surround our preserves, canyons, parks, and other open spaces, to adopt sustainable landscaping practices such as using native plants in their yards.

Thus far, we have hosted 3 events: a workshop with a presentation and Q&A session for property owners led by Jonathan Appelbaum, an educational event hosted by Bryal Hilton of Heaviland Landscape Management, and a photography hike led by Hilton where

participants learned about the best native plants to incorporate in their yards.

Visit sdrv.org/what-we-do/conservation for more information about our conservation projects.

EDUCATION

This year, under the leadership of Shelley Glenn Lee, Education Committee Lead, and Ana Lutz, Education Manager, we developed an Education Strategic Plan to guide the development of future programs and ensure the effectiveness of current environmental education curricula. Guided by this new plan, our educational programs continued to grow.

CITIZEN SCIENCE

This year, we focused our surveys on the Santa Fe Valley Open Space/Crosby Habitat Management Area, in addition to events held in other locations throughout the watershed.



Santa Fe Valley/Crosby Data

- **13** surveys conducted by trained Citizen Scientists
- **170** acres covered
- **58** Citizen Scientists



Other Highlights

- Conservancy intern Ryan Blaich (UCSD Environmental Systems Program) conducted assisted research on the effectiveness of riparian habitat restoration and avian usage (including the Federally-listed least Bells' vireo [*Vireo bellii pusillus*])
- Fifth grade students from High Tech Elementary North County conducted field activities and processed wildlife camera photos
- CNPS trained volunteers in survey methods and located several sensitive plants on a "Rare Plant Treasure Hunt"
- Five volunteers joined Jonathan Appelbaum and local naturalist Bob Forthun in collecting and recording benthic macroinvertebrates, including dragonfly nymphs, crane fly nymphs, midges, water striders, and more
- 9 volunteers participated in the Crest Canyon BioBlitz helping to identify over 100 plant and wildlife species within Crest Canyon for the 2019 City Nature Challenge

More information about the Citizen Science Monitoring Program, including updated results, can be found at sdrvc.org/what-we-do/citizen-science.

WATERSHED EXPLORERS



- Approximately 600 youth, including groups from Reality Changers and All Tribes Charter School, visited sites throughout the watershed for interactive field trips
- Living Coast Discovery Center hosted two programs in Del Mar: Seashore Splash and Science of Flight
- Four Family Adventure days, at Sikes Adobe Historic Farmstead, the San Diego Archaeological Center, Volcan Mountain and the San Dieguito Lagoon, allowed families to participate in our Watershed Explorers programming together



600
Students
served through
our education
programs

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS



- Students from High Tech Middle North County completed the Microclimates on a Macro Scale program, which consisted of classroom learning and five field experiences, culminating with a hike to North Beach, Del Mar
- Students from Cathedral Catholic High School visited the San Dieguito Lagoon for the Coastal Wetlands Field Ecology Project, which presents a real-world scenario and asks students to research, carry out field ecology studies, and gather and analyze data
- Over 20 field biology undergraduate students from Palomar College, under the supervision of researcher Dawn Lawson, instructor Sara Krauss, and Jonathan Appelbaum conducted a field research project on the sensitive wart-stemmed *Ceanothus* on SDRVC's Bernardo Mountain Property



RECREATION

Our first **Coast to Crest Trail Challenge** was so popular, we introduced a second round in July 2018. A third round kicked off in July 2019. In January 2019, we celebrated the ribbon-cutting of the Pamo Valley segment of the Coast to Crest Trail with the River Park JPA and over 100 trail enthusiasts. We continue to make progress on Coast to Crest Trail segments in Lusardi Creek, Osuna Valley, and Santa Ysabel.

RECREATION BY THE NUMBERS

5

Coast to Crest Trail Challenge guided hikes

2

Full Moon Hikes

18

Hikes, including Valentine's on Volcan, #OptOutside, Trails & Ales, and others with our partners

12

Yoga at the Birdwing sessions

317

Coast to Crest Trail Challenge finishers



Chuck Banker, Charlie Kahle, Elmar Zanforlin, Brenda Marshall, Bobbie Wright, Craig Robertson, and Werner Berger were among several Challenge finishers who hiked all five trails in one day!



We partnered with Helen Woodward Animal Center to train volunteers to take adoptable dogs out for monthly hikes while their temporary homes are being cleaned.



A little rain and chilly weather didn't stop us from enjoying an invigorating, heart-pumping hike up Volcan Mountain in February.



Students from Canyon Crest Academy competed to design a new patch for #C2CChallenge finishers. Angie Pei's design won, and Steven Zheng designed a new SDRVC logo patch.



We participated in GREY MATTER, presented by A SHIP IN THE WOODS, by spreading awareness of environmental stewardship and local habitat through the distribution of seed bombs.



We celebrated the River Park JPA's 30th anniversary in June 2019 and participated in the Community Fair along with over 25 other partner organizations.

OUTREACH, AWARENESS, AND FINANCIALS

Awareness of the Conservancy and our work in the River Park continues to spread throughout the County.



OUTREACH HIGHLIGHTS

- The Conservancy held, hosted, or participated in 35 total outreach events
- The Conservancy partnered with The Escondido Creek Conservancy to celebrate World Rivers Day with a screening of the documentary *Lost Rivers* and a stroll along the channelized portion of Escondido Creek
- The Conservancy facilitated a breakout session, "Awareness to Action: Creating Stewards from User Groups," at the California Trails & Greenways Conference in April 2019
- The Conservancy was recognized as a 2018 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

CONSERVATION

\$108,813

in grants for our habitat restoration projects



EDUCATION

\$7,500

in grants for our Watershed Explorers program



AWARDED TO OTHERS FOR SDRVC PROJECTS

\$642,500

in grants for restoration projects



Summer 2019

SAN DIEGUITO
RIVER VALLEY



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www.sdrvc.org

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Your support provides for

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

in the San Dieguito River Valley



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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 San Dieguito River Valley, preserving and restoring native ecosystems, and educating the public about our precious natural resources.

Reserve your seats now!



October 13, 2019 • 4:00 - 8:00 pm

L'Auberge
DEL MAR

Reservations: \$150 per person • R.S.V.P. by October 1, 2019

sdrvcrivervalleyfest2019.eventbrite.com



Entertainment by
Gregory Page



Keynote Speaker

Ronald R. Swaisgood, Ph.D.
Brown Chair/Director of Recovery
Ecology Institute for Conservation
Research San Diego Zoo Global