

# The ESCONDIDO CREEK Conservancy

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of The Watershed Voice and  
consider a membership today!

Date above your address label indicates the expiration date for your newsletter subscription. Please consider a membership today to keep *The Watershed Voice* coming!

## Mission Statement

The Escondido Creek Conservancy (TECC) is a non-profit public benefit corporation dedicated to the preservation, enhancement and protection of the natural open space within the Escondido Creek watershed. We support educational programs and compatible outdoor recreation within the watershed for the benefit of all residents of the area.

## The Escondido Creek Conservancy Officers

June Rady.....	President	Jeff Swenerton.....	Director
Steve Barker.....	V. President	Leonard Wittwer.....	Director
Brent Alspach.....	Secretary	TECC Office.....	760-471-9354
Tim Costanzo.....	Treasurer	Email.....	information@escondidocreek.org
Kevin Barnard.....	Director	Website.....	www.escondidocreek.org
Everett DeLano III.....	Director	Geoffrey D. Smith, MA.....	Executive Director
Jerry Harmon.....	Director	Mary Beth Francis.....	Watershed Voice Editor
Jack Olmstead.....	Director	Vickie Kleen.....	Bookkeeper

## TECC Corps: Volunteer Opportunities

*We have a saying here at TECC: "You couldn't pay our volunteers to do what they do." They wouldn't take the money! TECC Corps members give freely of their time because it is important to them to support TECC's mission.*

*They know that giving freely for a cause you believe in is the best compensation a person could want.*

*You are invited to participate in any way you can. It all adds up to a healthy watershed and a thriving community. TECC welcomes college internships!*

*Contact the TECC Office for more information on any of these opportunities or call 760.471.9354.*

**Office** - Membership database support; Preparing weekly response mailings to donors and members; office clerical support, filing, phones, outreach; support of property database; create an information file of non-government organizations

**Outdoors** - Citizen monitoring of the creek; property monitoring; conducting or coordinating interpretive outings

**Committee Support** - Service on any of our program committees is a great way to get involved!

Each of these committees is chaired by a TECC Board member and meets regularly on a monthly or bi-monthly basis:

Acquisitions & Management; Land Use; Membership, Outreach and Education (MOE); Water Quality; Fund-raising Development

**Community Outreach** -- Tabling at events and local merchants; slide shows; door-to-door canvassing

**Special Projects** -- Research Scenic Byway designation; Creek signage program in the city of Escondido and county of San Diego; Interpretive Center project support: architectural, interpretive design, construction; develop manuals for board, volunteers, and procedures

**Grants** -- Research and support grant application processing, working with the Executive Director



# Watershed Voice

The ESCONDIDO CREEK  
Conservancy

Please join in our conservation efforts by becoming a member.

A Publication of The Escondido Creek Conservancy

WINTER Edition 2007

## Members Wanted By June Rady, TECC Board President

This month marks the launch of TECC's first-ever membership drive. We are very excited about the growth this will bring to the organization and the increase in watershed stewardship that will naturally occur in our region.

Without the support of members like you, The Escondido Creek Conservancy (TECC) would not be able to protect and preserve one of North County's real treasures, the Escondido Creek watershed. For those of you who are not members, we need your help. We must expand our fund-raising

efforts to ensure success. Our goal is to increase our membership from 80 to 300 by May of this year.

The threats to the watershed are many, and there is much to be done. Major developments in Escondido, Harmony Grove, Elfin Forest, and Rancho Santa Fe are being proposed.

Your support of our efforts is essential as we continue to address the habitat protection and watershed issues that are inevitable with this impending growth. Funding for land acquisition, restoration, and other important missions of TECC is

solely supported by donations and grants.

Your membership enables TECC to expand its efforts to:

- Acquire and preserve open space land in the watershed;
- Restore native habitat by planting hundreds of native plants and trees while eliminating invasive species;
- Monitor water quality along Escondido Creek to prevent pollution;
- Collaborate with conservation organizations, governmental agencies, and water districts in protecting and preserving the creek;
- Provide open space management for 90 acres in the Escondido Creek watershed. Agreements in process now will soon raise the total to more than 300 acres;
- Provide ongoing educational and recreational opportunities for the community.

I am pleased to report we have been remarkably successful since the Conservancy was founded in 1991. We are particularly proud that TECC has preserved more than 1,000 acres of open space in the watershed through direct purchase or by working in cooperation with the county of San Diego and local developers.

Designated open space, owned by TECC, the County, Olivenhain Municipal Water District (OMWD), and private developers now stretches from Del Dios Highway to the creek. Additional acreage contiguous to the creek is presently being

negotiated for acquisition by TECC.

Throughout Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve and downstream, you can observe the large restoration project taking place that will reestablish the native vegetation of chaparral, oaks, and sycamores that were destroyed by the taller non-native eucalyptus trees (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) and invasive giant reed (*Arundo donax*), which blocked the sunlight. With the donation of native trees from local nurseries arranged by TECC and the work of OMWD and hundreds of volunteers, this promises to be one of the most beautiful areas in all of San Diego County.

Thanks to your generosity, TECC, in collaboration with OMWD, has raised more than \$300,000 so far to construct an Interpretive Center at the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve. This will serve to build a greater understanding and appreciation of this precious ecosystem.

In achieving our successes, TECC acknowledges the vital and important relationships it has formed with the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council, the Endangered Habitats League, The Nature Conservancy, the Friends of Daley Ranch, the Olivenhain Municipal Water District, The Rancho Santa Fe Foundation, The San Diego Foundation, the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy, city and county governments, developers and our hundreds of dedicated volunteers.

Please don't delay. Join The Escondido Creek Conservancy today. Your membership will have a positive impact on our watershed and will make a difference for future generations to come.



June Rady is the Board  
President of the Escondido  
Creek Conservancy.

# Up and Down the Creek *By Geoffrey D. Smith, Executive Director*

## Membership Has its Privileges

Can you remember your first membership? Maybe it was in Boy Scouts or Camp Fire or a little league team. Perhaps you joined the zoo, or became a member of a faith community.



member of many organizations, and each has affected me in different ways. Do you remember the feeling you had when you first joined an organization that you believed in? I hope it was meaningful for you.

You have an opportunity to begin a new and lasting relationship with an organization you believe in. For the first time in its 15-year history, TECC is offering memberships.

That's right, no longer are our supporters merely 'donors;' you are members! With all the rights, privileges and responsibilities afforded thereto. As a card-carrying member of TECC, many things will be as they always have been: you'll receive newsletters and invitations to events; you'll be asked to participate in important projects to acquire land or heal habitat; you may learn some new skills as you participate in TECC's myri-

ad programs. But one thing will be different. We hope that you will feel it in your heart. A sense of belonging. And with that sense of belonging, a duty of loyalty and duty of caring for the organization of which you are a member, just as your TECC Board members have had for 15 years.

Join today. Become a member of our growing family. I'll be looking for your TECC Member sticker!

(Footnote: I would like to personally thank Board Member Jeff Swenerton, through whose tireless efforts our membership drive has taken shape, and the generous support of the Brian C. Malk and Nancy H. Heitel Fund at the San Diego Foundation, which has provided needed financial support.)

I would love to hear from you. Contact me at [information@escondidocreek.org](mailto:information@escondidocreek.org) or call 760.471.9354.

### TECC relies on your generous support to further its mission of watershed protection. Here are some ways to give...

**Donate your car or boat.** Remember to specify 'The Escondido Creek Conservancy' as your beneficiary. Call 1-800-766-CARE or go to [www.cars4causes.net](http://www.cars4causes.net).



**Dozens of merchant partners** (including Major Market, Pep Boys, Claim Jumper and others),

have created a system that rewards customer loyalty by contributing a percentage of purchases to TECC. It's simple and convenient - all you

need to do is register your grocery club card and debit/credit card(s) at [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com).

**Donate online with your debit or credit card.** Conveniently contribute a single gift or provide ongoing support by establishing automated monthly recurring charges.



**Did you know...** After your lifetime, remaining retirement assets will be heavily taxed if left to family, but will have full value if left to TECC? We invite you to join others who are making a difference through TECC and Endow San Diego. Call our Executive Director at 760.471.9354 for details about this important endowment program that can derive personal benefits for you NOW.

(Money placed in endowment is left untouched in perpetuity - only the interest is spent.)



The TECC Traveling Road Show is ready to come to your community! Contact the office to schedule an informative multi-media presentation by our Executive Director about the Escondido Creek Watershed and TECC's exciting programs. Call today: 760.471.9354.

### ...ABOUT PAGE 1 PHOTOS

To the left, Randy Smith, Tom French, and Sandi Jacobson conduct chemical water sampling on the creek at Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve. The three volunteers are members of Golden State Flycasters (GSF), a fishing club dedicated to the preservation of fisheries and fly fishing. The three were part of a group of 20 volunteers who received training from San Diego Coastkeeper in the sampling protocols. TECC is indeed fortunate to benefit from GSF's adoption of Escondido Creek for their citizen monitoring work. Volunteers are needed! Contact the TECC office to learn how to participate.

To the right, several concerned citizens look over the site of the proposed Lennar Bridges Unit 7 development. Escondido Creek and the existing Bridges development are in the distance to the south of the project site. This project would construct about 30 custom homes on 80 acres in the heart of the core California gnatcatcher habitat, in the future MSCP-North (Multi-Species Conservation Plan). TECC, joined by the Endangered Habitats League and the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council among other groups, is opposing this project on several grounds, including placing the local gnatcatcher population in jeopardy. A final recommendation by the San Diego County Planning Commission on this project, originally scheduled for Jan. 26, has been delayed until after March 1.

## THE ESCONDIDO CREEK CONSERVANCY

YES! I support TECC's efforts. Please send the *Watershed Voice* newsletter. Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation. I want to be a member at this level:

### Basic Membership

- \$ 15 Student
  - \$ 50 Individual or Family
- Includes quarterly newsletter & TECC window sticker*



### Friends of the Creek

- \$ 100 *Includes basic premiums plus TECC baseball cap*
- \$ 300 *Includes basic premiums plus Eagle Creek Day pack*
- \$ 500 *Includes basic premiums plus invitation to Spring Celebration*



### Protectors of the Creek

- \$ 1,000
  - \$ 2,500
  - \$ 5,000
  - OTHER \_\_\_\_\_
- These levels of membership include basic premiums, plus additional recognition as appropriate*



I wish my name and contribution amount to remain anonymous.

I am interested in donating regularly. Please send reminders  
\_\_ Monthly \_\_ Quarterly

Please make your check payable to 'The Escondido Creek Conservancy' OR

Please charge my credit card: \_\_ One Time \_\_ Monthly \_\_ Quarterly

Visa  MasterCard  Discover  American Express

Credit Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code on back of card: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Note: For your protection, your credit card number information in our files is destroyed after being processed.)*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Company that will match my gift: \_\_\_\_\_

### BE A VOLUNTEER.

Yes, I would like to volunteer to work with TECC. Please contact me with opportunities to serve.

Your Contributions are tax deductible.

You can support TECC with the click of a mouse! Click the 'DONATE NOW' symbol on the [www.escondidocreek.org](http://www.escondidocreek.org) website for secure and efficient donations by credit card.



## TECC HONOR ROLL

The Escondido Creek Conservancy gratefully acknowledges the following donors for their generosity during the past 3 months.

TECC endeavors to recognize all donors. If we have inadvertently left your name off of this list, please don't hesitate to contact the office. We'll make it right in the next issue!

### Members

- Steve Ahles
- Paul Bergford
- Karen Byars
- Melanie Fallon and Anthony De Bellis
- Betsy Gilpin
- Thomas and Donna Golich
- David Harlow
- Joy and David Jackson
- Thomas and Margaret Knothe
- Tom Leech
- Mariposa Tree Service
- Gloria Murphy
- Rick and Heidi Paul
- James and Charlotte Smith
- Elaine Dodge and Martin A. Staubus
- Jeff and Carolyn Swenerton
- Ricky Schlesinger
- Helen S. Simmons
- Phyllis Strickland
- Bill Tippets
- Frank and Gail Twohy
- Kirbie and Stacie Wolfe

### Protectors of the Creek (\$1,000 +)

- Janene Colby -- \$5,000
- Karen Gardner and John Phillips -- \$1,000

### In-Kind

- Tim and Claudia Costanzo - File cabinet
- Eagle Creek - Day packs for donor premiums
- Andrew and Tanya Malk - 1995 Volkswagen Jetta
- Jack Olmstead - Wheel barrow; document shredder
- San Diego Archaeological Society - File cabinet
- San Diego Futures Foundation - Desktop computer

### Grants

- The Jack and Jill Campbell Fund at The San Diego Foundation -- \$250 for operations
- The Brian C. Malk and Nancy Heitel Fund at The San Diego Foundation -- \$7,000 to support the membership campaign

### Friends of the Creek (\$100 +)

- Steve and Nona Barker
- Bonita and Kenneth Baumgartner
- Harry and Stacy Ehrlich
- Habitat West, Inc.
- Ed and Janice Hall
- Chris and Linda Khoury
- Rick Landavazo
- Suzann & William Leininger
- Kim MacConnel
- Olivenhain Municipal Water District
- Margaret and William Robison
- Ali Shapouri
- Leo and Wilma Wittwer
- Martha Blane and Leonard Wittwer

### Interpretive Center Capital Campaign

- Tim and Claudia Costanzo - BMW SUV, in-kind gift for auction
- Harry and Stacy Ehrlich -- \$1,000
- Mark and Kathy Fackler -- \$1,000
- Helen Thomson Fund at the Rancho Santa Fe Foundation -- \$1,500

## Outings Continued from Page 4

Aug. 25, Saturday: 6th Annual 'Concert on the Creek' Featuring Berkeley Hart

This year the concert returns to the Lazy J Ranch in Elfin Forest. Plan now to attend this extraordinary event. Save the date - Details coming!

## Summary of Projects and Issues in the Watershed

The Lennar Homes Bridges Units 6 and 7 development proposals are still pending before the County Planning Commission. The Unit 7 project would construct about 30 houses on 80 acres of prime coastal sage scrub – the preferred habitat for the California gnatcatcher.

Based on this fact and other concerns such as emergency access and community character, TECC continues to oppose the project and maintains regular communication with the proponents. Future hearings will be after March 1...

The Harmony Grove Village proposal for 750 homes on more than 400 acres currently occupied by egg ranches and dairy farms - was approved by the County Board of Supervisors on Feb. 7. TECC continues to be opposed to the current project density and will address a variety of issues as the project continues to go before permitting agencies...

With the recent successful passage of Prop. 84, designating more than \$5 billion in funds for acquisition and restoration statewide, a number of regional efforts are currently underway to identify and prioritize projects.

TECC is participating in: the Integrated Regional Watershed Management Plan (IRWMP) process and the San Diego Conservation Resources Network's Land Acquisition Pipeline project (TECC's Executive Director serves on the SDCRN ExCom.). TECC's proposals in these ranking processes include a number of collaborative land acquisition projects in the watershed...

TECC recently learned of a proposal to build a 1,200-unit development on 500 acres on Mt. Whitney, just above Questhaven Retreat in Elfin Forest. The project, named University Heights, poses a significant threat to rural community character and open space systems...

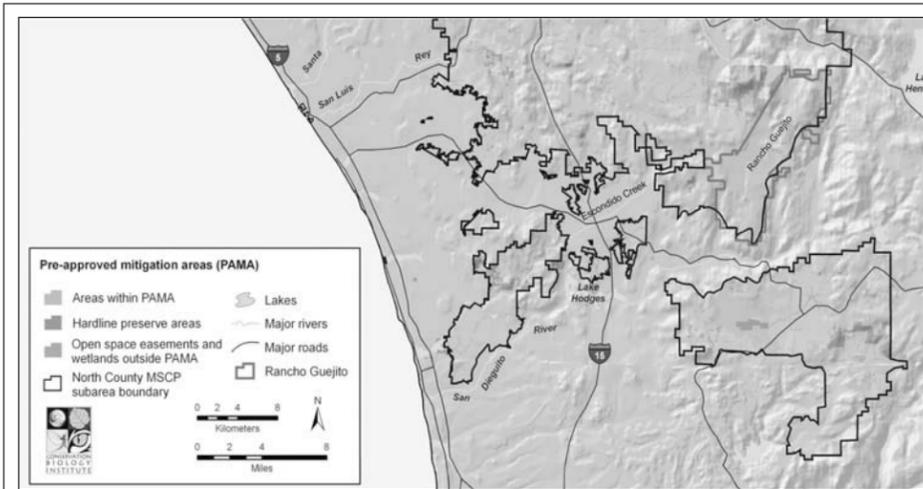
TECC is an active participant in discussions revolving around Rancho Guejito and the owner's recent bid to file for annexation to the city of Escondido. This 20,000-plus-acre intact Mexican Rancho is a priceless open space jewel adjoining the upper headwaters of Escondido Creek...

TECC recently distributed 350 direct mail pieces to every home in Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove, with information concerning managing invasive plants and landscaping with natives. The mailing was made possible by a grant from the Elfin Forest Community Foundation...

The Interpretive Center Capital Campaign has reached the \$300,000 point, and a citizen design review advisory committee is being formed to review design proposals to be submitted in response to an RFP. Occupancy of the center is planned for mid-2009. We can't wait!



Credit: Mark Thornhill, North County Times



In January, the current managing partners of Rancho Guejito announced their intentions to annex this 20,000-plus-acre intact Mexican rancho to the city of San Diego. Located above the upper headwaters of Escondido Creek, the owners of this pristine open space jewel have up to now indicated their intention to keep the rancho intact as open space.

TECC is participating in discussions with local non-profit groups to respond to this new and disturbing development. View the Conservation Biology Institute's report about this special place, "Conservation Significance of Rancho Guejito - The jewel of San Diego County" at [www.consbio.org](http://www.consbio.org).

Credit: Map courtesy of the Conservation Biology Institute

Visit the TECC website to subscribe to the free 'e-TECC' electronic newsletter for up-to-the-minute news and activities. Issued monthly.



## Join Us as We Learn About the Escondido Creek Watershed

*"I only went out for a walk and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in."* - John Muir

### Outing sign-up procedure:

Contact the outing leader at 760-471-9354 or [information@escondidocreek.org](mailto:information@escondidocreek.org) to learn more about each week's trip and to sign up. Registration is required in case there is a change of plans and to manage trip size. All outings are led by our Executive Director Geoffrey Smith, who is well-versed in the local land-use and resource management issues in the watershed. Meet 15 minutes prior to start time. Please, no dogs. Children are welcome on some trips when accompanied by parent or legal guardian.

### Wednesdays in the Watershed Series

Mid-week half-day hikes to special places in the watershed. If your work or school (or retirement!) allows, this is a great way to break up your week and avoid the weekend crowds. (1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month), 9 am – 12 noon.

#### Feb. 21, 9 am – noon: San Elijo Lagoon, South Shore Hike

Where does our water go? Why, San Elijo Lagoon of course! We'll see how this nearly 1,000-acre coastal wetland manages the water it receives from Escondido Creek. Meet at the Rios Ave trailhead: I-5 to Lomas Santa Fe exit; Drive west on Lomas Santa Fe Drive; Turn right on Rios Avenue; Drive to end of Rios Ave and park along the curb. Easy, 4 miles, flat. Call 760.471.9354 or [information@escondidocreek.org](mailto:information@escondidocreek.org) to sign up.

#### March 7, 9 am – noon: Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve - Lake Hodges Overlook Hike

Hike up the Way Up Trail and Lake Hodges Overlook loop, overlooking Del Dios, Lake Hodges, and East County. Meet at staging area at EFRR. Intermediate, 6 miles, 700' gain/loss. Call 760.471.9354 or [information@escondidocreek.org](mailto:information@escondidocreek.org) to sign up.

#### March 21, 9 am – noon: Stanley Peak Hike

A brisk hike up to the recently dedicated Stanley Peak addition to Daley Ranch. Enjoy spectacular 360-degree views of the upper watershed. We'll hike the Sage Trail along the eastern perimeter of Daley Ranch, checking out Bear Valley to the east, including two important acquisition priorities. Meet at the upper end of La Honda. This is a joint Sierra Club 'Wednesdays in the Mountains' outing. Intermediate, 7 miles, 1,000 feet gain/loss. Call 760.471.9354 or [information@escondidocreek.org](mailto:information@escondidocreek.org) to sign up.

#### The Months Ahead:

For information on future WiW Outings, please contact the TECC office: [information@escondidocreek.org](mailto:information@escondidocreek.org) or 760.471.9354.

### Weekend Events

#### April 14, Saturday: Sixth Annual Earth Day Service Project in the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve, 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

We'll have something for everyone; spreading mulch, plantings and a creek cleanup. Meet at the parking lot staging area, ready to get dirty! Drinks and snacks provided by our corporate sponsor, Adventure 16. Participants should wear pants and long

sleeve shirts. RSVP to Olivenhain Municipal Water District: (760) 632-4212 or [efrrfriends@olivenhain.com](mailto:efrrfriends@olivenhain.com)

#### April 21, Saturday: Elfin Forest Garden Festival

The unincorporated, rural community of Elfin Forest is home to many unique gardens. This festival celebrates the genius of their designers and the diversity of options available to rural gardeners. Here you'll be inspired by the many possibilities of gardening on a grand scale and you'll take home plants and garden-related merchandise to remind you of your garden adventure. Proceeds benefit the fire wise demonstration garden, Elfin Forest Fire Department, The Escondido Creek Conservancy and other community organizations. More info at [www.elfinforestgardens.info](http://www.elfinforestgardens.info)

#### May 5, Saturday: Membership Recognition Spring

Celebration Event (Rain date: May 6)  
Spend the day in spring-time splendor as we celebrate the season and our membership in TECC. Lunch and guided interpretive walks at the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve are planned. Don't miss it! Save the date - Details coming!

Continued on Page 5

### Be Prepared! Here's a short checklist of gear to bring and wear:

#### Clothing:

Light weight shirt (nylon is best), light weight pants (nylon is best), hat, sturdy boots, windbreaker, jacket

#### Food:

2 quarts water, nuts, fruit, crackers, cheese

#### Other:

cash, identification, day pack, extra clothes, extra food, first aid kit, whistle, sun screen, sun glasses, hiking staff



### This 2003 BMW X5 SUV Could Be Yours!

64K mi/100K mi. warranty. 3.0 liter. Class 3 hitch. Gray-Green color. Leather interior.

Through the generosity of the Claudia and Tim Costanzo family, this beautiful vehicle has been donated to TECC to be auctioned to the highest bidder. Proceeds will benefit the Interpretive Center campaign. Get complete specifications and make your bid today by visiting the TECC web site, or calling the office. The current highest bid is posted on the web site, starting at \$20,000. Bidding will close April 20, at 5 p.m. exactly. Remember, TECC is a 501(c)(3) tax-deductible charity, so be enthusiastic in your offers!