

THE MOUNTAINS EXPERIENCE

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Summer 2007

25 Years
of Service

1981 - 2006

This year, MRT celebrates its 25th anniversary! In this and forthcoming commemorative newsletters, we'll share the story of our journey. Your financial and volunteer contributions have enabled MRT to become a progressive leader in land acquisition, stewardship and educational programs in the Santa Monica Mountains.

MRT's trail of success is based on the same principles that also govern the ecosystems that it protects: sustainability based on community, connectivity and continuity. This issue will highlight connectivity — the partnerships established over the years and how MRT works with the many agencies, organizations and non-profits committed to protecting the mountain experience.



Cold Creek

Celebrating 25 Years of Stewardship

Stewardship of the Santa Monica Mountains: a collaborative effort without borders

"We in the Santa Monica Mountains enjoy the great benefit of outstanding partnerships among the various federal, state and local agencies, as well as nonprofit organizations. Grant funders need to see that there is broad support for public open space protection, and these partnerships show our ability and willingness to cooperate with each other and that we will continue to work together to protect them. We know that we are stronger when we pool our resources and expertise, and the result is seen in the abundance of

high priority parkland for the public," states California State Senator Sheila Kuehl.

In this 25th anniversary issue, the Mountains Restoration Trust (MRT) pays tribute to the power of partnerships, highlighting the collaborative achievements that are protecting the mountain range. Board member David Frith-Smith recalls, "MRT realized early on that in order to protect the mountain environment, it needed to mobilize with other agencies and neighboring communities, joining the forces of small groups." The non-profit land trust works with many of the estimated 65 governmental agencies that have jurisdiction in the Santa Monica Mountains running in both Los Angeles and Ventura County. MRT also works with nonprofit organizations and community groups that share a common

vision of preserving the mountains' valuable and unique ecosystems.

Partners in Land Acquisition

In 1981, MRT was formed by a partnership between the California Coastal Commission and the California State Coastal Conservancy. They needed assistance in facilitating a mitigation and transfer of development credit program within the Santa Monica Mountains. "Over the past 25 years, MRT's assistance to preserve and restore sensitive lands in the Santa Monica Mountains and, in particular, within the Cold Creek Watershed, have been indispensable. The Commission staff has enjoyed its long-standing partnership and looks forward to the coming years in continuing our efforts," states Gary Timm,



"Mother Oak" provides habitat for wildlife at Headwaters Corner at Calabasas.

District Manager for the California Coastal Commission.

MRT's role expanded in 1984 when it was asked by The Nature Conservancy to accept the 520-acre Murphy Ranch Preserve in the Cold Creek watershed now known as Cold Creek Preserve. Developing into a land trust, MRT actively began working in partnerships and collaborations to purchase unique and pristine lands possessing spring-fed streams, riparian resources, exceptional biodiversity and proposed or existing trails. In these early years, the Coastal Conservancy provided guidance, expertise and funding to help establish the nonprofit organization.

Since 1981, the MRT has protected over 6,000 acres, consisting of over 350 parcels, preserved for their significant ecological value and habitat. Many of these acquisitions: Cold Creek Preserve, La Sierra, Tuna Canyon and Dry Canyon Creek are ongoing efforts to expand protected areas now owned by MRT and governmental agencies and to buffer critical habitat zones and create wildlife corridors.

These collaborative efforts have been essential to prevent over-development. Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky and the County of Los Angeles have been instrumental in recognizing the preservation needs of biologically rich and diverse areas pertinent to the survival of the ecology of the Santa Monica Mountains. Over the years, the County of Los Angeles has partnered with MRT in co-sponsoring grants and approving funding for acquisition of these special places for the people who live in and around and for visitors to the local mountain

environment, as well as for the wildlife and plant diversity.

MRT also works with groups dedicated to Santa Monica Mountains land preservation. "If it were not for the readiness of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy/Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority and the Mountains Restoration Trust to pitch in on short notice, several thousand acres protecting the ecosystem would clearly be

on the other side of the ledger today," says Paul Edelman, Deputy Director of Natural Resources and Planning for the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

In 2000, MRT, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and the City of Calabasas worked together assembling several properties to create a unique urban/wildland interface, Wild Walnut Park, in the Calabasas area. An 84-acre parcel became a rustic park and designated open space that includes critical trail connections. Concluding in 2003, five additional parcels were purchased, establishing Headwaters Corner at Calabasas, a progressive educational interpretive center for schoolchildren, residents, and visitors to the mountains. Headwaters Corner contains examples of five eco-systems and a historic home with remnants of what could be the original 1890s homestead cabin.

Partners in Habitat Restoration

Equally important to acquiring ecologically valuable land is restoring it. Impact over the centuries has degraded the mountain landscape and damaged natural areas with the introduction of non-native plants and animals. However, in less than two decades, the results of restoration and stewardship efforts have begun to reverse the damage.

In 1992, MRT and California State Parks initiated the Commemorative Oaks program in Malibu Creek State Park. With the help



YMCA Trailblazers volunteers plant native bunch grasses in Malibu Creek State Park as part of the Commemorative Oaks program.

of volunteers, non-native vegetation has been removed and replaced with over 2,500 trees. MRT Program Director Jo Kitz has organized scout troops, faith-based and environmental organizations, volunteer groups from local businesses and schools, inner-city kids from Outward Bound Adventures, Inc., as well as individuals, in this extreme gardening challenge of weeding and planting to restore the oak woodlands of the Las Virgenes Valley. "The results are astounding," describes Kitz. "Park visitors can enjoy viewing native wildlife that has returned to the area and witness the beauty of the mountains in their natural state."

Working in partnership, MRT, the National Park Service and California State Parks obtained grant funds in 2001 to tackle a 5-year project restoring 4 miles of Malibu Creek on state parkland by removing *Arundo donax*, a giant reed that was choking out native riparian habitat. "Restoration projects like these are tough due to limited resources", says Restoration Ecologist Christy Brigham with the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. She explains how working with MRT makes them far more achievable. "MRT has worked a long time in the mountains and brings a lot of knowledge and expertise. They provide the needed planning and administrative support to coordinate the projects among the various agencies and know the techniques in restoration to provide project oversight."

Another major restoration project is currently underway at Headwaters Corner at Calabasas. (Please read about Dry Canyon Creek restoration on page 6.)

Partners in Protection

Streams and waterways are the lifelines of the mountains. A full range of aquatic and terrestrial animals, birds, insects, and amphibians rely on them for their protective



Pepperdine University Animal Behavior Laboratory technicians give a presentation to children at Headwaters Corner Interpretive Center on the return of newts and tree frogs after removal of non-native crayfish predators.



Dr. Marcus Eriksen of the Algalita Marine Research Foundation gives a presentation from his recycled boat FLUKE at the Stream to Sea Family Fun Day. Please visit Dr. Eriksen's website at www.plasticsareforever.org for more information.

riparian habitat. Learning how to protect this sensitive environment is a high priority at MRT and it has a long history of partnering with both the scientific and educational communities in research efforts to better understand this unique biome.

Cold Creek Preserve's pristine condition has become a benchmark of scientific study in the Santa Monica Mountains. "My students and I have had a long lasting relationship with the Mountains Restoration Trust that has helped to unravel the mysteries of chaparral ecosystem function," states Dr. Stephen D. Davis, Distinguished Professor of Biology at Pepperdine University Natural Science Division. "Our collaborative work began in 1989 and has contributed much to our understanding of the chaparral plant communities that dominate the Cold Creek Preserve and much of the Santa Monica Mountains. We greatly appreciate the support and services rendered by our friends at the Mountains Restoration Trust."

These partnership research and protection programs have also restored wildlife within the mountains. In 2002, MRT and Dr. Lee Kats, Associate Provost for Research, Pepperdine University Natural Science Division, undertook a three-year amphibian restoration project on Trancas Creek. When invading crayfish were removed, the newts and tree frogs returned to the stream in record numbers. "I consider MRT one of the leaders in setting conservation priorities for the Santa Monica Mountains," says Kats, "Their partnership has been instrumental in achieving a better understanding of mountain stewardship."

Partners in Education

One of the world's largest outdoor learning spaces, the Santa Monica Mountains houses roughly 400 species of birds, 50 species of mammals and 35 species of reptiles and amphibians. As the future of the mountains depends on the stewardship interests of new generations, the MRT is actively involved in many educational and community service programs. Through partnerships with the Cold Creek Docents, the U.C. Natural Reserve System, the National Park Service, and California State Parks, MRT has brought thousands of children into the Santa Monica Mountains, introducing groups to the natural world's precious resources and providing an awareness of our environment. "Funding and grant programs in environmental education are earmarked for partnership programs," says Brigham, who supervises Eco-Helpers, a student education program that has brought over 4,000 students to learn about watershed and habitat restoration. The Eco-Helpers staff and students partnered with MRT in restoring over 121 acres of riparian habitat in Solstice Canyon with 6,290 native species planted along Solstice Creek.

Many of MRT's acquisitions are used as outdoor learning laboratories to help stimulate children's curiosity on subjects such as local ecology, geology, astronomy, natural and cultural history. Arranged by youth educator Susan Haugland, through the Youth Naturalist Program (YNP) and Discovery Nature Camp, she partners with scientists, naturalists and biologists to help children

discover the natural world through hands-on activities, field trips and presentations. (Please see YNP schedule on page 8.)

Educational partnerships are not just for kids. With local agencies and professionals, MRT has designed progressive programs and special events that provide information and education to enhance mountain living. These cooperative efforts include the Fuel Modification Workshop conducted in collaboration with the Los Angeles County Fire Department, the Great Backyard Bird Count in conjunction with the Audubon Society, Arbor Day Foundation tree planting celebrations, Allied Artists of the Santa Monica Mountains art exhibit and sale, and even a Rattlesnake Avoidance Training for dogs and their owners. Environmental education fairs and events such as the Earth Day celebration, Stream to Sea Family Fun Day educates people of all ages on good conservation habits and water ecology.

For mountain residents, a program called "Living on the Edge," designed in partnership with the Mountain Lion Foundation, The Nature of Wildworks, and California Wildlife Center, addressed living in the rural/urban setting and how to cohabitate within this special ecosystem. A booklet, produced by MRT and funded by the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project, is available from MRT upon request. Please call the office at (818) 591-1701 to receive a free copy.

Partners in Public Access & Enjoyment

A goal of MRT and the many agencies dedicated to protecting the mountain environment is to also provide public enjoyment within the 153,075 acres that make up the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, the largest urban recreation area in the country. In 1984, one of the early collaborative efforts was building the Stunt High Trail with the Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council (SMMTC) for the public to enjoy Cold Creek Preserve's lush setting. "From the very beginning MRT was always thinking of ways to expand resources," says Linda Palmer who worked on the trail and is currently vice president of the SMMTC. "We learned early on that we all needed to support each others' efforts."

Even acts of nature did not stop MRT's efforts, says Ron Webster the leader of the Sierra Club Trail Crew. After the 1994 earthquake closed the Cold Creek Canyon Trail, MRT secured FEMA money and his crew and the Los Angeles Conservation Corps repaired and rebuilt the trail to provide public access once again. "We had crews of 12 to 14 people working 6 to 7 hours a day," recalls Webster.



Ron Webster, Sierra Club Trail Crew leader re-routes the Cold Creek Canyon Trail after the 1994 earthquake.

These thriving partnerships not only preserve valuable natural lands, but also incorporate rural recreation into city living. MRT and the City of Calabasas are currently establishing a city-wide trail system that includes the "Trail Between Two Valleys," a 1.15 mile segment of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail. MRT Project Manager Debbie Bruschaber worked with the City of Calabasas, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and the Juan Bautista de Anza Unit of the National Park Service to create the trail. "These projects are possible because of the cooperative effort of dedicated individuals working toward a similar goal that produce wonderful assets for the community," says Bruschaber.

Public access to mountain areas has become an increasing challenge as urban development and private ownership results in growing barriers among the scattered parklands. "You only need one landowner along a chain of public land to put up a fence to block a trail," says Palmer with SMMTC. She describes how the MRT has an ability to negotiate with private landowners in opening areas for the public. As urban lifestyles reach the rural environment, established partnerships are essential to bring an awareness of mountain stewardship to the communities throughout the range. "We all know to call MRT," says Palmer. "They have established a reputation of being a partner to all of us."

Partners with People

As a non-governmental agency, MRT has been able to work effectively with the private sector. Using creative approaches and negotiation

skills, Executive Director Steve Harris not only facilitates MRT's land purchases but also assists other organizations and agencies in acquisitions and campaigns. "We can help organize efforts to obtain the funding resources, expertise, and support to accomplish large-scale purchases where land is very expensive," he explains.

MRT-led community campaigns have raised over a million dollars to purchase land for wildlife protection and public use. In the early 1990s, the community took an active role in collaboration with MRT in fundraising efforts to acquire the Cold Creek Valley Preserve, a critical addition to the Cold Creek watershed preservation efforts. In 2005, MRT along with the Committee to Save Soka/King Gillette Ranch coordinated the private funding and community support campaign for the multi-agency acquisition of the King Gillette Ranch property located on the corner of Mulholland Highway and Las Virgenes Road. MRT has also organized and empowered communities in their own efforts. Residents in the eastern Santa Monica Mountains were assisted by MRT in forming the Briar Summit community campaign which helped establish benefit assessment districts for the purchase of wildlife corridors in this heavily developed area of the mountains. These two assessment districts have funded in excess of \$30,000,000 for parkland acquisitions.

MRT is proud of its years of service as a partner in protecting the magnificence of the Santa Monica Mountains. The staff would like to express its gratitude to those who have helped MRT accomplish its goals, including those who have given of themselves: serving on our board of trustees, helping in the field, and lending their expertise and skills on the variety of projects in areas of acquisition, restoration, education, and research, thereby enhancing the mountain experience for generations to come.



Mark L. Lamken, Esq. has donated his legal expertise in real estate law since 1982. His generous pro bono contribution has been instrumental in successfully guiding MRT through its first 25 years.

MRT Happenings

Interpretive Walks in the Cold Creek Preserve

Weather ranges from very hot to very cold – dress in layers, wear sturdy shoes and hat, bring water and snacks. Please call MRT office at 818-591-1701 for more information or visit www.mountainstrust.org.



Cold Creek Preserve

First Saturday Walks with Cold Creek Docents

Cold Creek Valley Preserve
September 1, 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm
October 6, November 3, December 1
9:30 am to 11:30 am

Savor an autumn walk-about along a streamside trail through oak woodlands to a gently rolling chaparral basin below craggy sandstone peaks. Meet at Lower Stunt High Trailhead.

Sunday Cold Creek Docent Walks

Cold Creek Canyon Preserve
August 26, 6:00 pm to 9:30 pm
Sept. 16, Oct. 21, Nov. 18; 9:30 am to 12 pm
Dec. 16, 10 am to 12:30 pm
Meet at Lower Stunt High Trailhead.

Second Saturday Walks with MRT Interpreter

Cold Creek Canyon Preserve
Sept. 8, Oct. 13, Nov. 10, and Dec. 8
9 am to 12 pm
Enjoy a leisurely interpretive 2-mile walk through one of the gems of the Santa Monica Mountains. The trail passes through oak woodlands, wetlands and across a newly configured slope created in the giant landslide of 2005. Meet at lower gate to Preserve. Please RSVP by calling 818-591-1701.

Sunset/Moonrise Walks with MRT Interpreter

Cold Creek Preserve: Top of Stunt Road
Sunday, September 23, 5:15 to 8:15 pm
Sunday, October 21, 4:30 to 7:30 pm
Sunday, November 18, 3:30 to 6:30 pm
Sunday, December 23, 3:15 to 6:15 pm
Enjoy views of distant mountain ranges, rugged sandstone outcroppings, the sweep of

Santa Monica Bay and the unspoiled beauty of Cold Creek Preserve from the Topanga Lookout site. Bring supper, water and a 'goodie' to share. Please RSVP by calling 818-591-1701.

Habitat Restoration Days

Individuals and groups are invited to do native plantings, remove invasive plant species, and restore habitat. Bring drinking water and wear sturdy shoes and work clothes. A hat, gloves and sunscreen are suggested. Receive credit for community service hours. Tools are provided. Please RSVP by calling 818-591-1701 to reserve tools and confirm time and location.



Family enjoying a volunteer day as part of the Commemorative Oaks program at Malibu Creek State Park.

Malibu Creek State Park: Commemorative Oaks Program and Oak Woodland Restoration

Commemorative Oak Grove
Saturdays, August 18 and September 29
8 am to 11 am
Tapia Unit, California Native Plant Society (CNPS)
co-sponsored event.
Sunday October 14, 9 am to 1:00 pm

Commemorative Oak Grove Make a Difference Day

Sunday, October 28, 9 am to 12 pm
An annual, nation-wide celebration of neighbors helping neighbors, and today we human neighbors will help restore or enhance the homes of our native neighbors – the birds and animals of our natural lands. Mountains Restoration Trust invites individuals, families and groups to join in this project. Oak woodland restoration supports the animals that live in the park. Bring a lunch to picnic in the park.

Weed Wars

Sunday, December 9, 9 am to 1 pm
The California Native Plant Society Commemorative Oak Grove commemorates the lives of some awesome CNPS members.

Oak Woodland Restoration
Sunday, November 18, 9 am to 12 pm
Saturday, December 15, 9 am to 12 pm

Headwaters Corner at Calabasas and Dry Canyon Creek habitat restoration

Coastal Cleanup Day

Saturday, September 15
8 am to 11 am
Sponsored by the California Coastal Commission, Coastal Cleanup Day provides a day for people to become involved in cleaning up our precious waterways and ocean.

World Water Monitoring Day

Tuesday, September 18
This international effort encourages communities to monitor the quality of water in our local watersheds. Learn how to test for a core set of water quality parameters. Please call the office for more info.

National NeighborWoods Day

Saturday, October 13
8 am to 12 pm
Celebrate the benefits of trees in the places people live. Help restore habitat along Dry Canyon Creek; do native plantings, non-native plant removal, and site restoration.

Saturday, November 3, 8 am to 12 pm
Sunday, December 16, 8 am to 12 pm
Come and join the community effort to restore a headwater ecosystem of the Los Angeles River.

Cold Creek Preserve

Saturday, August 25, 8 am to 11 am
Sunday, September 30, 8 am to 11 am
Saturday, October 13, 9 am to 12 pm
Sunday, December 2, 9 am to 12 pm
Help re-establish the oak and willow woodlands along the creek to create riparian habitat from weedy fields.

La Sierra Preserve

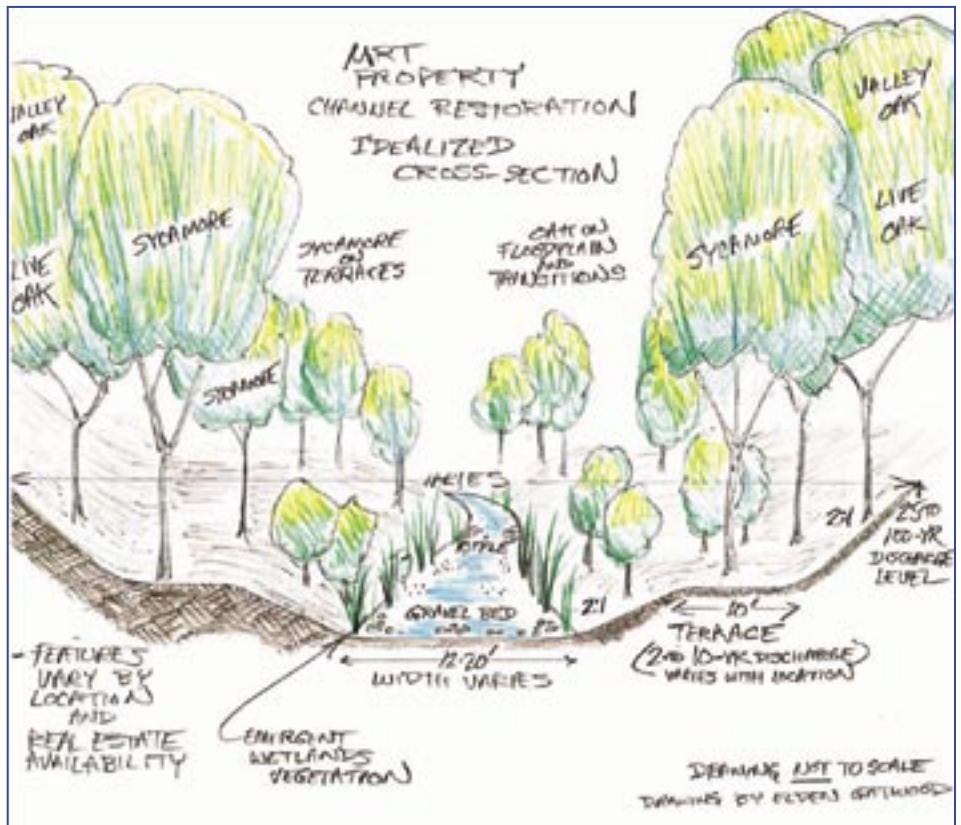
Sundays, Aug. 26 and Sept. 2, 8 am to 11 am
Sunday, November 4, 9 am to 12 pm
Saturday, December 1, 9 am to 12 pm
This beautiful area has a remarkable diversity of native plants, but some areas are choked with weeds (invasive non-native plants). We will remove them to allow the native plants to create wildlife habitat.

Please also see Youth Naturalist Program calendar on page 8.

The Restoration of Dry Canyon Creek at Headwaters Corner at Calabasas

Imagine a stream. It is a headwater along the southwestern reach of the Los Angeles River which supports five ecosystems. It is also a wreck – a dumping ground for human debris; washing machines, tires and enough old auto parts to build a Volvo. The stream is severely undercut and overrun by non-native plants that are choking out the indigenous ones. Birds cannot nest nearby because the stream has become so narrow in places that the trees on its banks simply fall over. Various failed attempts at extending useable land by building six foot high retaining walls along the stream have left a chaotic mish-mash of rubble, concrete and asphalt slabs, halved power poles, eucalyptus trunks, and other unidentifiable fill materials.

Now, imagine this stream restored to a clean, clear, smoothly flowing state which provides vigorous wetland and riparian habitat. Big dream, right? Well, Yes! But it was MRT Project Manager Debbie Bruschaber's vision for Dry Canyon Creek when she began working on the Headwaters Corner at Calabasas site for a new Interpretive Center. "It is something I've been working on for over seven years, starting with looking for the money to purchase the property at Headwaters Corner," says Debbie, her eyes gleaming with pride and perhaps a little



"Laying back of creek bank" conceptual drawing.

relief. "When we began thinking of buying this property, restoring Dry Canyon Creek was one of the main attractions." Stream restoration here would serve as a model for environmental projects throughout the southern California region and beyond.

One of MRT's biggest funders at the time was the Department of Water Resources Urban Stream Restoration Program. Headwaters Corner at Calabasas offered the opportunity to put their money to significant use in a much needed creek restoration project, as well as provide MRT with the new Interpretive Center needed to expand its educational programs. "The stream became the basis of site development," Debbie notes, "because everything else followed from our plans for its restoration."

Restoring Dry Canyon Creek called for a three-pronged plan involving: habitat restoration, bank stabilization, and human needs. During the five years it took to fund the project, MRT hired a team of professionals to come up with stream restoration plans. Their work (see illustration) was crucial to both fundraising and subsequent restoration work. Specialists at this stage of Dry Canyon Creek restoration were: Elden Gatwood – Geomorphologist who began creating the Ecosystem Restoration Plan; and Linda O'Hirok - Geomorphologist who continued with in-the-field recommendations after Elden left the area. The J. Byer Group provided soils analysis, and Mike Bubalo Construction Company did civil engineering on the site and structural engineering for the bridges. Wetland delineation and restoration plans were drawn up by David Magney Environmental Consulting. Finally,



Before Restoration:
Streambank was vertical and armored with stacked concrete and asphalt rubble.

Ann Riley - Stream Scientist, reviewed all plans. Funders who came on board during the planning stage were: the Army Corp of Engineers In-Lieu Fee Mitigation Program and the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board's In-Lieu Fee Program.

Fast forward to June 2006. Amazingly all the permits required to begin restoration work came through within 75 days. "Every agency involved was supportive and responded to our applications without delay!" says Debbie. Clearly, a project like the Dry Canyon Creek restoration made everyone happy and willing to go the extra mile to get it done. With the permit applications approved, and the Mike Bubalo Construction Company ready to begin work, the Dry Canyon Creek restoration project took off.

In October 2006, Senna Tree Company moved the big trees from the stream banks for a reduced fee. At around the same time MRT faced a dreaded *tree frog emergency*. The front yard was shady, grassy and alive with hundreds of tiny frogs. "I was hoping they would move out like they had in the past. Well, a week before construction began, they were still there, so we had a frog round-up," Debbie laughs. Frog wranglers were Susan Haugland, MRT Youth Naturalist Program teacher and her students, a City of Calabasas building official and his two kids and MRT staff. On a Saturday morning, several hundred frogs were collected in coolers and relocated several hundred feet downstream. "Everyone had a blast and felt really good about what they had done."

MWH Development took down fencing material and provided laborers, a bobcat and roll-off recycling containers for removing several loads of garbage and concrete rubble -- the final prep work so the big excavation equipment could come in. Then Mike Bubalo and his construction workers hauled tons more debris from the stream and its banks, graded the new slopes and terraces and built the bridges. Besides keeping costs low and donating some services, these wonderful builders, who were used to working with concrete and rebar, brought incredible sensitivity to their handling of plants and trees. And as grading moved forward, the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works donated needed rock.

Following right behind Mike Bubalo and his workers were the bio-engineering crew: Restoration Ecologist, Molly Brooke, Debbie Bruschaber and the native plant landscapers. Others involved in landscaping the new banks of Dry Canyon Creek were: native plant suppliers Tree of Life Nursery, Soka University Botanical Gardens, Los

Angeles County Fire Department Forestry Unit, and the National Park Service. And Out on a Limb Company donated tree trimming services.

Because grading began in January 2007, the threat of rain was ever-present. The MRT stream restoration team moved as quickly as possible along the newly cleared banks of Dry Canyon Creek stabilizing them with coconut mats, thousands of young willow, mulefat tree stakes, and brush mattresses. The brush mattresses are grids of four to five foot long willow stakes that are laid on the banks with their toes in the water. The stakes take root and stabilize the banks, especially around sharp stream meanders. The restorationists followed the graders until the end of April. "We were so lucky," Debbie says, "because all of this was going on when it could have poured at any time. A few days of hard rain could have ruined everything. This time a dry winter worked in our favor."

"Professional Onlookers" Mark Abramson from Heal the Bay and Jessica Hall from the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission watched over the planting team. "They were there just to make sure it all looked as good in reality as the planners had imagined on paper," Debbie grins.

"The willows are coming in very heavily now," says Debbie. "And our little herd of deer is helping us beat over-planting by

eating some of them. Unlike humans, they don't overeat. Our deer know better than to destroy their own habitat!"

Now all that's left to do is to monitor the progress, weed and water. About 150 volunteers pitched in on Arbor Day including a Community Service class from Pepperdine University. High school volunteers have come from: Calabasas High School's Project Cool Down and Earth Club, Granada Hills High School and Notre Dame High School. Everyone is welcome to visit Headwaters Corner to help care for the new plants on MRT's monthly restoration days. (Please see schedule on page 7.) Individuals and groups are invited to make special arrangements to help out.

This summer, the banks of Dry Canyon Creek are already home to a variety of young native trees including: willows, cottonwoods, oaks, ashes, sycamores, walnuts, and mulefat. For the birds, berry plants including: currant, blackberry, snowberry, coffeeberry, and elderberry are growing. And for natural beauty, mugwort, monkey flower, and a variety of wetland grasses adorn the creek banks. Debbie is thrilled to report that "it's not going to take long for the willows to grow up. They will grow twenty feet in three to four years. It's going to be beautiful!"

Story by Florie Gilbard
MRT Volunteer



After Restoration: Gently sloping bank with riparian and wetland plants.

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Malibu, CA**

Mission Statement

Working in partnership with the community to preserve, protect, and enhance the natural resources of the Santa Monica Mountains for the benefit of the environment and for present and future generations through: land acquisition and conservation easements; habitat preservation and restoration; and research and education.

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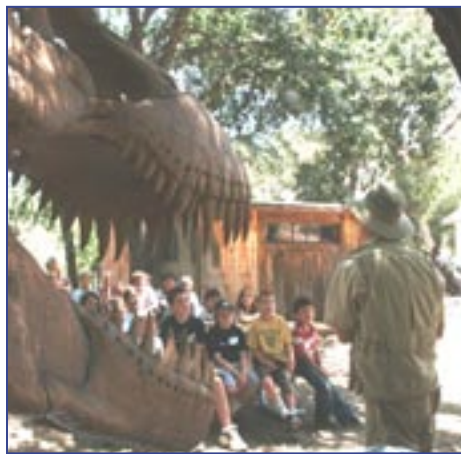
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Youth Naturalist Program Calendar

Second Saturdays, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm at Headwaters Corner at Calabasas (unless otherwise noted). Programs are designed for 8 to 12 year olds and include an activity, craft, outdoor experience and usually a guest speaker or animal. Pre-registration and nominal fee. 818-591-1701 ext. 181.



Children in the June session of the Discovery Nature Camp at Headwaters Corner experience close up and personal learning about paleontology.

Malibu Lagoon State Beach Family Field Trip

Saturday, August 11
Malibu Lagoon contains water draining to the sea from five cities in its 109-square-mile watershed. It is called a wetland and has more biomass (living matter in a given habitat) per acre than any other ecosystem. It is a critical stopover and wintering area for migratory birds and food sources for rearing young along the Pacific Flyway. It is breeding and nursery ground for various coastal fishes. During this session we will explore the importance and preservation of wetlands. Bring binoculars, if you have them, lunch and water.

Nighttime in Nature

Saturday, September 8, 6:30 to 9:30 pm
Children will discover the nightlife of wildlife and why they are up all night. Enjoy a pizza dinner before the evening hike and craft.

Mammals

Saturday, October 13
Children will learn what makes a mammal a mammal and how many are in the Santa Monica Mountains. They will take a hike to look for signs of mammals, see mammals a guest brings, and make a craft.

Native American Culture

Saturday, November 10
Children will learn about the Native American people that lived in this area for thousands of years. Come discover what they used for food, clothing, tools, toys, medicine, etc. A hike and related craft are included.

Astronomy

Saturday, December 15, 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm
Children will learn about the night sky with the aid of several telescopes. Guest speakers will guide us through the stars, planets, nebulae and constellations. An astronomy craft is included.

Discovery Nature Camp

Monday through Thursday, August 20 – 23, 9 am to 3 pm
Children will participate in a positive, fun and enriching learning experience. Participants will hike, create nature crafts, interact with live animals and take a field trip. Topics will include reptiles and amphibians, mammals, and Native American culture.

Please also see MRT event calendar on page 5.