



## President's Message



As the holidays embrace us, I know you will take the time to reflect on the importance of family and friends and the need to love, protect and enjoy them. The recent months have been historic and extraordinary moments in our lives, and they add even more significance to the need to defend our liberty and our democratic ideals at every opportunity.

We have engaged in many energetic debates this last year, and it is easy to forget that few other places on this earth would permit that kind of discussion, dissention or compromise. Yet, for us, it is the very essence of our system of government.

Today, we have Americans serving their country in every far-flung corner of the world. Much of the freedom and independence we enjoy is attributable directly to those in uniform who have for generations heeded the call to duty. We owe them our thoughts, our gratitude and our prayers.

May this holiday season find you and your family and friends in the best of health. May the New Year bring you peace, prosperity and contentment.

Ruth Gerson

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## WOW, Did We Celebrate Recreation!

There were 150 horseback riders and another 30 people who all came to show support for Recreation on Saturday, October 20, 2001. There were 8 sponsors of this ride, and I hope you will thank them when you see them and use their businesses when you can. They are: Gwen Allen, Bob Boone, Bill and Inger Hogan, ETI Corral 22, ETI Corral 36, Robin Rick – Old Agoura Realtor, La Canada Flintridge Trails Council, BusyData.com – web service company. All of their support for this event was greatly appreciated.

Most people drifted in around 9 am, but that's not counting the 10 people who came the day before and camped overnight. They drove up from Orange County to be ready to ride with us in true support of equestrian recreation. The American flag welcomed everyone at the registration. The parking was so convenient along Stokes Cyn Rd.; and it was nice not having to jockey for a good spot, because they were all good spots. The weather was definitely in our favor, not too hot and with a nice breeze later in the day.

## WOW, Did We Celebrate Recreation! (continued from Page 1)



The site of our event was just ideal – Malibu Valley Farms. Our hosts, Brian and Mia Boudreau, were most gracious and generous in allowing us to stage this event at their place. They have been loyal supporters and truly committed to protecting recreation and horses. From Stokes Cyn. Rd. we rode our horses down Mulholland Hwy to Las Virgenes Rd. There, the California Highway Patrol stopped traffic for 150 horses to cross and to ride safely along Mulholland and past the narrow bridge to the Grasslands Trail. There were 60 or more bicyclists and several cars stopped behind one patrol car; and the 25 or so motorcyclists and more cars were stopped behind another patrol car from the other direction. No question about it – all traffic was stopped for the safety of the horses. It was such a beautiful sight and very colorful.

Most of the group went north on the Grasslands Trail into the Liberty Canyon area of Malibu Creek State Park. We passed the Velarde Adobe and rode along Liberty Canyon Trail to the Talopop Trail. The Talopop is a loop trail that slowly winds as it climbs the hills to a ridge that has views of the entire Las Virgenes Valley. It is an easy trail with no drop-off edges. As the riders spaced themselves farther apart during the climb, there was lingering for some great photo shots. Riding north along the trail, no one suspected there were bees. They stung a few people and some horses and a mule; but everyone managed to get through them without being bucked off, fortunately. The trail loop closed near White Oak Farm, an old homestead that is within Malibu Creek State Park and was at one time a working farm. We then traced the Grasslands Trail back to Mulholland Hwy.

Since we did the Talopop Trail much faster than planned, some riders continued on the Grasslands Trail south of Mulholland and also rode the shorter trail ride section. Some of the group had initially chosen to ride a shorter time in this direction. From the Grasslands Trail there is a slight incline up to a saddle with a magnificent view looking west through Malibu Creek State Park. Riding down to High Rd., we traveled a short ways before turning off onto a trail down to the creek. In March, the water was so high here that it was over my boots when I rode my horse through. Now, it was just a trickle; unless, of course, you wanted to swim in the deeper pool farther upstream. I know of one horse that cooled off there. Crossing the creek, we headed toward the Hunt House, which is now a visitor center that the docents manage. It was here that we picked up a few stray riders that had been exploring on their own, and they rode with us up the Chaparral Trail that climbs the hill behind the Hunt House. From the top of

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this hill is the view of the Rock Pool and the gorge beyond; and behind that gorge and the hills that form it is where 'Mash' was filmed. We wound down the Chaparral Trail to Mott Rd. and then to the Arizona crossing, which has been damaged for years and vehicles can no longer drive through it. However, it is easy for the horses to cross the creek here. Then we picked up the Grasslands Trail again and headed back to Malibu Valley Farms for the catered Calamigos BBQ lunch. It was a great ride - perfect weather, nice people, good horses & mules, great help from CHP and State Park, wonderful trails, pretty views - just a wonderful ride.

What a treat it was to honor our 3 trail guardians. Linda Palmer, Liz Blackwelder, and Darrell Readmond. We have all been so fortunate to have had these dedicated people out in the front lines for so many years, and so committed to trails. In fact, they are still working for trails. When that trail connection gets in your blood and becomes part of you, there is no way it ever leaves you. You think about trails all the time, about ways to improve them, ways to connect with other trail systems, ways to increase trail maintenance, and about ways to ensure they will be here forever. It was our pleasure to honor these wonderful, caring friends and to thank them for their invaluable efforts.

There were many who helped to make the REC Ride such a successful event - Calamigos Ranch catered the great BBQ lunch and also furnished the sound system, and the tables and chairs. They sure know how to cook. It was so-o-o delicious! [www.malibusignshop.com](http://www.malibusignshop.com) made the banners for REC. Linda Tarnoff arranged for the Board of Supervisors' plaques for the honorees. Mike Levison, president of Sand Canyon Trails Council, made and donated the trail sign awards. California Highway Patrol and State Parks were most helpful in ensuring our safety in crossing Las Virgenes Rd. and along Mulholland.

There was representation from many organizations, from people near and far away; and there were many different breeds of horses. It was quite an eclectic mix of horses and people that supported this recreation event.

Thanks to everyone who came, those who rode horses and those who didn't, and to everyone who donated towards celebrating recreation. You are each an important player in the political game of helping to sustain our rural way of life.

## **County Horse Boarding Ordinance**

County Planning officials have indicated that work is expected to begin on the Board of Supervisor's instructed changes to the ordinance after the first of the year. The first step will be to arrange meetings with equestrian and property owner groups around the county. They expect a draft ordinance to be available in the spring. Hearings are expected to be conducted by the Planning Commission during the summer. If you would like a copy of the "white paper" prepared by REC on the subject of horse boarding, please see our web page or call Ruth Gerson at 818-991-1236. If your organization would like a county rep to speak with them about the proposed changes, REC will be happy to assist with the arrangements.

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## **Will Rogers State Historic Park - Status**

Rusty Areias, Director of the California Department of Parks and Recreation has written to REC and many other organizations in the State to indicate that the boarding of private horses at Will Rogers has “temporarily” been suspended. His assertion is that environmental issues and the degradation of the historic facilities are creating legal issues. He claims that the boarding has made the Park out of compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State’s own General Plan for the Park. Others contend that the state has mismanaged the supervision of the facility.

Regardless of the issue, the decision of State Parks to evict the boarders has created an enormous hardship on equestrians living on the West Side of Los Angeles. Coupled with the potential eviction of riders at Sullivan Canyon, there may be no place left in West Los Angeles to ride or commercially board a horse. It is a real tragedy for recreation.

Anyone wishing to express their concern about this issue should contact the Park Superintendent Steve White at 310-573-7265. E-mail to [swhite@csp-angeles.com](mailto:swhite@csp-angeles.com).

## **Comments on State Recreational Trails Plan**

The California Department of Parks and Recreation recently circulated their draft State Recreational Trails Plan for public comment. REC has submitted comments proposing more trails, the creation of a string of equestrian campgrounds, clearer definition of multi-use trails, education and training for State Parks staff about horses, and better relations with recreation stakeholder organizations. REC’s comments may be viewed on the web page at [gotorec.org](http://gotorec.org).

The Trail Plan may be viewed at [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov).

## **Sullivan Canyon Update**

Equestrians are still enjoying the Sullivan Canyon riding facility, at least temporarily. The School District has agreed to discuss continued use of the site by the riding public while they attempt to find a buyer for the property. The Sullivan Canyon Preservation Association has filed a lawsuit against the District over the manner in which they are trying to dispose of the property. The district has rejected a \$2 million offer by the Association.

In the meantime, the district has had to “restart” the public notice process on at least two occasions because they can’t seem to get it right. Senator Shelia Kuehl, Assemblymember Fran Pavley, and Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky are supporting the Preservation Association’s efforts.

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## **Monte Nido Equestrians Attacked by Coastal Commission**

The Coastal Commission has clearly declared war on horses and equestrians in the Santa Monica Mountains. Until now, they have been insisting that 100 to 200 foot setbacks from stream beds and habitat, as well as fencing around the driplines of oak trees, only be done by persons seeking new permits from the Commission. Recently, however, the Commission enforcement staff has sent “notice of violation” letters to four adjacent homeowners in Monte Nido directing that the offending corrals, sheds and fences be removed. These letters dismissed the option of obtaining an “after the fact” permit to allow the improvements. They also indicated that none of the removal and restoration may even be conducted without first obtaining a coastal permit.

Members of the Monte Nido Property Owners Association indicated that as many as 200 homeowners in their community could be in similar violation. In addition, property owners in Topanga and Cold Creek could be facing the same fate. REC is working with the Association to reverse the Coastal Commission staff efforts. Of greatest concern is that these same prohibitions will be included in the new draft land use plan being prepared by the County and the Coastal staff. If anyone else has received similar notices, we would like to know. Please contact Ruth.

## **Sepulveda Basin**

In a surprise reversal, the Bureau of Sanitation has decided to substantially reduce the proposed sewage pond project planned in the Sepulveda Basin. They specifically cited the impact on recreation as the reason for scaling back the project from 300 acres to 61 acres.

When the project was first announced, REC sent a highly critical letter to the Bureau and the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council denouncing the effort to “steal” this important recreation asset. It is just one more example of the environmental movement attempting to deny the public access to publicly owned recreation and open space. Fortunately, this time, they underestimated the strength and reaction of the recreation community. Thank you to every one who communicated with the Bureau on this issue.

## **REC Granted Tax Exempt Status**

REC has officially been notified by the Internal Revenue Service that our request for tax exempt, non-profit status, has been granted. Contributions to REC are tax deductible and now REC will be able to concentrate all of its resources on its mission of expanding recreational access.

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## **WILDERNESS and the Forest Plan Update re: "WILD & SCENIC RIVER" = Bad Planning, No Recreation!**

How do you make a "Wild & Scenic River out of a Dry Streambed? Well, under the guise of a National Forest Plan Update, you simply request it! First, let 's examine the "River" aspect of this proposal. Does it matter that on every USGS, County, State & Forest Service Map the Big Tujunga Creek is not a navigable body of water, simply a "Creek"? And like so many other "Creeks" in Southern California, Big Tujunga Creek is dry 6 months out of the year! Hardly a "River" here! Now, how about Wild? With County Flood Control Dam #1 on the upper reaches and the Army Corp operating Hansen Dam on the lower, Big Tujunga Creek has been tamed since the 1930's.

Water quality, Biota preservation, a couple of Threatened and Endangered species - and the only people who will be enjoying the scenery in the area will be some of those non-profit environmental groups who proposed this in the first place. These non-profits will certainly "profit" from the grants they will be able to get to study and oversee so as to enforce their will on the areas. With a "Wild and Scenic River" designation Special Management Regulations are enforced 1/4 mile on each side of the "River." The recreational public, which includes equestrians and others who enjoy being out in Their National Forests, could be forced off their own land!

Object to this craziness and tell the USFS that the only thing 'Wild' about this is the proposal itself. Demand that they must stop attempting to limit the access and enjoyment of Our Public Lands!

Regarding Wilderness Designations, the American Heritage Wilderness Group (which is linked to the Sierra Club) recently approached the people living in Big Tujunga Canyon for support of a Pocket Wilderness on USFS lands adjacent to private properties. The Big Tujunga area is quite expansive and includes trails, camping/staging areas: Condor Peak, Mt. Gleason, Ybarra Canyon, Yerba Buena, Mendenhall Ridge, Bandito, and Trail Canyon, the feeder trail to the Pacific Crest Trail. The USFS revealed that Wilderness Designations bring very restrictive management policies for them and very restricted entry for the Public. This designation is one step away from National Monument status. Remember the nightmare for Utah!

Make special note of Big Tujunga Canyon, squeezed between a Wild and Scenic River and a Wilderness area! This would eliminate almost all of the recreation in the entire Los Angeles River District of the Angeles National Forest!

Stop these groups before they stop Your Enjoyment of Your National Forest Lands.

Object to this and any other "Wilderness Designation" in the Forest Plan Update as being far too restrictive for Recreation and also for preventing the USFS from managing the vegetation for Fire Protection and Trail Maintenance.

Remember - Don't just limit your objections to Big Tujunga Creek, since there are over 40 canyons and creeks nominated for this status. Tell the USFS to drop this "Wild River" category entirely from all the Forest Plans in Southern California.

**\*\*\*PLEASE DO IT NOW – COMMENT PERIOD Closes DECEMBER 31, 2001 \*\*\***

Send objections to: Forest Plan Update/ USFS, 10845 Rancho Bernardo Road, San Diego, CA 92127-2107 / fax 858-524-0130 / Forest Plan Update Website @ [www.r5.fs.fed.us.sccs](http://www.r5.fs.fed.us.sccs) or toll free 1-866-252-8846

Angeles Nat'l Forest 626-574-1613 ; ANF / LA River District 818-899-1900

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## Malibu Land Use Plan Alert

The City of Malibu has submitted a new Land Use Plan to the California Coastal Commission for their approval. This proposed plan is an unvarnished attempt to remove all agriculture (crops and horses) from the Malibu City limits. It will prohibit the construction of any ancillary structures (sheds, barns, etc.) in conjunction with single family homes. IN MOST CASES, CONDITIONS WILL BE IMPOSED PROHIBITING DOMESTIC ANIMALS. Horse owners need to react immediately.

The City has used a very clever ruse to disguise their intentions in the plan. On the one hand, the plan speaks to public access, more trails, better recreation and greater “resource dependent uses.”

With the other hand, they take it all away by designating everything in the city an “environmentally sensitive habitat area (ESHA).” The ESHA designation changes all the rules and overlays a different set of regulations which essentially prohibit all the grand things the plan envisions in its early chapters.

This plan is the vanguard effort to take the Santa Monica Mountains away from the public who paid to preserve them for public use. If it is successful in Malibu, the same provisions will begin cropping up in the LA County Land Use Plan currently being drafted by the Commission staff. We need to rally to the support of our equestrian families living in Malibu.

The Plan may be reviewed on the Coastal Commission website at [www.coastal.ca.gov](http://www.coastal.ca.gov).

THE COMMISSION HAS SET THE FIRST HEARING ON THE PLAN FOR THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 2002 AT THE WESTIN HOTEL AT LAX. PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND, OR SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS.

## Private Recreation Providers Survey

In cooperation with the National Park Service, REC has conducted the first survey of private recreation providers in the Santa Monica Mountains. The task required that all the camps, conference centers, restaurants, lodging, fishing, sports, picnic, spas and educational facilities be identified and mailed a questionnaire about their services. Information about the facility type, annual revenue, number of annual visitors, first year of operation, and overnight accommodations was requested from each owner. Approximately 131 facilities were identified, excluding the beach specific services. To date about 10% of the surveys have been returned. All the information will be provided to the National Park Service to assist in their efforts to develop a comprehensive new general management plan for the Santa Monica Mountains.

There is still time to complete a survey. If your business is located within the Park boundaries, and caters to visitors to the Santa Monica Mountains Recreation area, call Ruth Gerson for a copy of the survey. We need to have your input.

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## UC Davis Launches Manure Study

With encouragement from Envirohorse, researchers at UC Davis have undertaken a three phase study of the effects of equine manure on public health and the natural environment. The study will attempt to determine whether or not horse manure contains pathogenic E. coli O157:H7. Volunteers are needed to collect samples from their own horses for this phase of the study. The second phase will create a database of genetic fingerprints for equine E. coli strains to enable easier future identification in the event of a water quality challenge. Phase 3 will assess the presence of “weed” seeds in equine manure to address charges that horses contribute to the distribution of non-native vegetation in the open space areas and trails.

To make a contribution to this effort, or to volunteer to complete a survey and collect a manure sample, contact the Veterinary Medicine Teaching and Research Center, Dr. Rob Atwill 559-688-1731 or email at BABtt@earthlink.net.

## Welcome New Sponsor

REC is proud to welcome Mary's Tack and Feed in Rancho Santa Fe as our first newsletter sponsor and advertiser. Their support will help to defray the costs of printing and mailing of the monthly newsletter. Anyone who would like to become a regular advertiser should contact Ruth Gerson. The newsletter is distributed to several thousand households monthly.

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## Valuable Contacts

### Contact REC: Ruth Gerson, President

Phone (818) 991-1236; fax (818) 889-4540 Visit REC's website at:

Email <ruth@gotorec.org>

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

### Contact the Board of Supervisors

Board of Supervisors 500 W. Temple Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90012

SUPERVISOR	Phone	Fax	Email
Michael Antonovich	213 974-5555	213 974-1010	fifthdistrict@bos.co.la.ca.us
Don Knabe	213 974-4444	213 626-6941	don@bos.co.la.ca.us
Zev Yaroslavsky	213 974-3333	213 625-7360	zev@bos.co.la.ca.us
Yvonne Burke	213 974-2222	213 680-3283	seconddistrict@bos.co.la.ca.us
Gloria Molina	213 974-4111	213 613-1739	molina@bos.co.la.ca.us

### Contact the Planning Commission

Regional Planning Commission

320 West Temple Street Los Angeles, CA 90012 (213) 626-0434 Fax

Email <lstark@planning.co.la.ca.us> or  
smmnap@planning.co.la.ca.us>

### Contact the National Park Service

401 W. Hillcrest Drive

Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

(805) 370-2300 Phone (805) 370-1850 Fax

To visit the Plan: [www.nps.gov/samo](http://www.nps.gov/samo)  
email: samo\_gmp@nps.gov

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## RECREATION & EQUESTRIAN COALITON

### Membership Form

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_

FAX \_\_\_\_\_ (EMAIL) \_\_\_\_\_

#### I can help with...

Phone Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Attend Hearings \_\_\_\_\_

Organize Events \_\_\_\_\_

Distribute Flyers \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

Individual \$25 \_\_\_\_\_

Family \$50 \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \$100 \_\_\_\_\_

Business \$250 \_\_\_\_\_

Donation \_\_\_\_\_

REC Hat \$12 \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail your check payable to: REC • P.O. Box 245 • Agoura Hills, CA 91376

## REC Mission Statement

The mission of the Recreation and Equestrian Coalition (REC) is to inform the public and policy makers about access to and the use of diverse recreational opportunities available throughout Los Angeles County and the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. REC will protect and defend the region's rich natural diversity and promote public/private partnerships to preserve and expand visitor-serving recreational facilities.

### Are You A REC Member Yet?? - - Time To Renew or Join

REC membership is growing rapidly. Your \$25 annual membership is the primary source of our funds for REC activities. It supports the coordinating efforts to protect public access to public lands, the education of policy makers and the public, and the newsletter for spreading the word about problems and notifying you of hearings and meetings. If you are not now a member of REC, we'd like to count you as one of our supporters. Send your street or e-mail address to [ruth@gotorec.org](mailto:ruth@gotorec.org) or to PO Box 245, Agoura Hills, CA 91376, or leave us a phone message at 818-991-1236, and we'll send you a membership application. We appreciate your support in preserving our equestrian and outdoor lifestyle by attending events and through financial donations.

### Send Us Your E-Mail

REC is remodeling and upgrading its website and E-mail capabilities. Please send us your email address so we can contact you quickly when urgent issues arise. You can still choose if you want to receive future newsletters and legislative notices by e-mail or by snail mail. Let us know your preference, or make a note when you send in your membership.

Agoura Hills, CA 91376

P.O. Box 245

RECREATION & EQUESTRIAN COALITION



## MARY'S TACK & FEED

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Mary's Annual Tent Sale is February 15, 16, 17, 2002

**3 DAYS ONLY!**  
**FRI • SAT • SUN**

This is the best time of year to stock up on everything you need for your horse and stable. From buckets to blankets, saddles to supplements, you'll save with BIG discounts!



- The Best Sale of The Year
- The Biggest Discounts
- Everything On Sale\*
- Thousands of Dollars in FREE Prizes
- FREE Parking at Del Mar Horsepark (right next door)



To Prepare For This Event  
Mary's Will Be Closed  
Thursday, February 14

Order Toll Free  
(800) 551-MARY

Order Online Anytime!  
[www.marystack.com](http://www.marystack.com)



\*Mary's Annual Tent sale discounts all items EXCEPT horse and pet feed, worms, bedding and some saddles that are already at the nlg lowest acceptable price. Discounts may not be combined with other offers. Sale pricing limited to stock on hand.