

Wilderness Link

San Gorgonio Wilderness Association

September 2022

Volume 10, Issue 3

Calendar of Events

These are the major events planned for 2022. Some dates may change as circumstances with Covid 19 evolve. Check your email and the volunteer calendar at www.sgwa.org for updates.

September

- 4 Final Ranger Talk
- 25 Barton Flats closes
- 27 Board meeting

October

- 15 Awards Potluck
- 25 Board meeting

November

- 29 Board meeting
Election of officers

December

- 3 Christmas party

January

- TBD Board planning retreat

Patrol Volunteers Fulfill Core Mission of SGWA

By Bettye Miller

Patrolling wilderness trails is a core activity of SGWA's mission to protect the San Gorgonio and Cucamonga wilderness areas, to serve the public, and educate visitors. It's also a lot of fun, as any volunteer who has patrolled these trails will tell you.

We asked volunteers who do day and overnight patrols why they do it, their best stories of the 2022 season, and why this SGWA activity is important. Read on to see what they had to say.

Dan Scott, a 30-year patrol volunteer

I love patrols in the wilderness for three reasons: Preservation of the forest which I love so much; guidance and education of public contacts; and the peace and quiet surrounded by majestic beauty.

The best story this summer was my encounter with a bear at Dry Lake a few weeks back. He ravaged many campsites. So much time was spent educating the public regarding bear protection, in addition to chasing the bear down to get my food back.

In addition, I took my 14-year-old grandson on a patrol with me as I did with my son for many years. Third generation of Scotts enjoying the same wilderness we have been protecting for decades.

This is a very important service to the public as we provide knowledge, safety, and valuable information to them on each patrol. Additionally, we are there when they need us the most ... when they get injured!



Ranger Dan Scott

See Patrols on page 3

Washout Wipes Out Forest Festival

The Forest Festival, a signature public outreach event of SGWA, was cancelled this year after repeated debris flows and flooding washed out a section of Highway 38 between Angelus Oaks and Jenks Lake Road in late July and August.

We look forward to next year's date – Saturday, Aug. 19 – and thank planning committee members Donna Harward, Curt Lindemer and Bettye Miller for their hard work in planning and growing this event.

Celebrating Wilderness

Gifts to the San Gorgonio Wilderness Association help support our efforts to preserve the wilderness and the forest surrounding it. We are thankful for these supporters whose generosity makes it possible for us to further our mission to serve, protect and educate. This list includes lifetime members and individuals who have contributed to SGWA since January 2020. If you would like to make a gift in memory of a loved one or to honor someone special please contact our office at (909) 382-2906, or visit our website at sgwa.org. Gifts may be mailed to: San Gorgonio Wilderness Association, 34701 Mill Creek Rd., Mentone, CA 92359

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Director's Desk Val Silva

SGWA activities are in full swing. Volunteers have donated over 11,000 hours so far this year.

Trail crews are out two days a week and have removed over 600 trees from the trails.

Trail patrols are covering most trails, assisting hikers, providing trail information and water information.

Big Falls, Mill Creek Visitor Center, and Barton Flats Visitor Center have been open each weekend as have the programs at Greyback Amphitheater (until the closure of Highway 38 near Angelus Oaks put a crimp in some plans; looking forward to the road reopening Labor Day Weekend).

Volunteering is a great way to get out and help others while keeping you healthy.

Volunteers have many opportunities to enjoy the forest while working with the public. We need people with all skills and interests. Come join our great group of volunteers! Our next orientation is in May 2023. I know it seems a long way off but it will be here before you know it!!!! Sign up at [Volunteer | San Geronio Wilderness Association \(sgwa.org/volunteer\)](https://www.sgwa.org/volunteer).

SGWA Country Store

Need maps of the San Geronio Wilderness, Pacific Crest Trail, or national forests in Southern California? Check out SGWA's Country Store on the SGWA website, www.sgwa.org/.

Paper maps don't run out of battery life, nor are they dependent on a cell signal. Even experienced hikers should take a paper map and compass.

The Wilderness Link is published quarterly by the San Geronio Wilderness Association.

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Contributors this issue:

Curt Lindemer, Dee McCoy, Rex Philpot, Lorien Sanders, Val Silva and Domenic Wager

Submit story ideas and photos to sgwa@earthlink.net or gorgoniogal@gmail.com

Patrols

Continued from Page 1

John Howell, a 4-year patrol volunteer

I prefer to go out during the winter months and find that when others are out overnighing in the wilderness that on the whole they're a hardy bunch that enjoys the solitude of the "off" season.

My favorite part of patrols is just being out in the wilderness! Whether it's listening to the wind going through the trees on a fall hike, setting up camp in the snow, enjoying the spring/summer wildflowers. It is so enjoyable to get away from the city and slow down a bit.

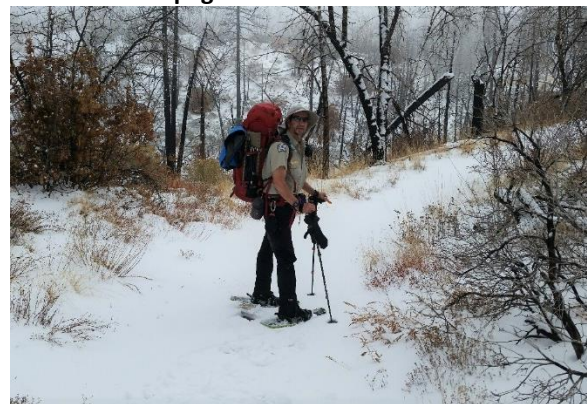
This summer I was able to help out some folks who were planning to camp up high during that big thunderstorm that closed Highway 38.

I helped them find good campsite at the Lodgepole camp so they could stay drier and not go up above the tree line during a thunderstorm. I taught them how to hang their food so that the bears wouldn't get it. I wanted them to have a good experience in the wilderness in storm conditions.

I believe that our patrols are a vital part of keeping the wilderness clean, whether it's crews cutting the trees that have fallen across the trail, cutting back the buckthorn that overgrows the trails, picking up the loads of trash and equipment left behind by visitors, and breaking down and restoring areas used as illegal fire rings.

Without our volunteers up there doing this it would be a much different wilderness experience for the public. Also just by being out there we are in a position to help hikers, whether they're directionally confused, need help with trail/water condition, or just need to know someone is there in case of an injury/accident.

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John Howell on winter patrol

Volunteer Profile

Curt Lindemer

By Bettye Miller

Curt Lindemer has hiked the Aspen Grove Trail for years, from the time his sons – now young men – were small. But it wasn't until he retired from his position as controller of Esri, the Redlands-based software company, in 2019 that he began volunteering with SGWA.

"I have good memories of hiking this trail with my family," he said. "It is the only grove of aspens in southern California. Hearing the sound of nearby Fish Creek and seeing the mountain meadow near the Fish Creek Trail junction make the trail a treasured mountain experience."

Curt said he decided to join SGWA after hearing about the organization during one of his visits to the Mill Creek Visitor Center.

"The mission of SGWA was meaningful to me and consistent with my desire to promote preservation of our forests for future generations," he said, adding that he appreciates how SGWA's mentor and training programs provide opportunities for volunteers to participate in various activities and help prepare them to fulfill the organization's mission.

A current member of the Board of Directors, Curt has worked at the Mill Creek Visitor Center, answering visitor questions, responding to telephone calls, and selling Adventure Passes and SGWA merchandise; patrolled trails in the San Gorgonio Wilderness; appeared as Smokey Bear; co-chaired the Forest Festival committee in 2021 and 2022; and tried his hand at trail maintenance work.

He also is active with the Redlands Police Citizen Volunteers, helping in the Crime Analysis Department and assisting RPD with traffic control during special events, such as the Redlands Bowl summer program and parades. Curt also is a media technician in his church's worship services.

Volunteering on a trail project in 2019 taught him a lot about his capabilities and limits, he said. "That experience also gave me huge respect for the work effort and passion of SGWA volunteers who maintain and improve wilderness trails."

One of his favorite patrol experiences occurred on the San Bernardino Peak Trail earlier this season.

"I met a couple returning from an overnight backpack with the father carrying his 15-month-old son in a carrier on his back," Curt recalled. "I was impressed with the parent's effort to share the wilderness with his young child, who will hopefully see the burned forest restored in his lifetime.

"Fifteen minutes later I encountered another couple who was also returning from an overnight at a different campsite. The father had his toddler daughter on his back.

"Seeing these families and other hikers enjoy the wilderness encourages me to continue supporting the mission of SGWA."



Curt Lindemer atop Mt. San Gorgonio

Did you know?

- ✓ September is National Wilderness Month and was established by President Obama on the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, which was signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson on Sept. 3, 1964.
- ✓ National Public Lands Day is Saturday, Sept. 24. It is one of five fee-free days when entrance fees are waived at national parks, national forests, and other public lands.
- ✓ Our trail crews have removed a whopping 766 trees from trails so far this season – a record! They also have cleared or repaired 32,558 feet of trail to date. Awesome job! SGWA has issued nearly 6,000 wilderness permits this season – 1,261 overnight and 4,510 day permits as of mid-August.

Patrols

Continued from Page 3

Paul Valiukas, a 4-year-volunteer

I like the visitor contacts, answering questions and providing information. I feel like the information is helpful and visitors appreciate it. Having a lifelong appreciation for the wilderness, I feel through our mission of "To Protect, Serve and Educate" that I am, in some small way, helping to protect and preserve this resource while at the same time helping visitors have a good experience.

This summer I encountered two backpackers trying to make a decision of where to camp. They had a permit for Columbine, but expressed safety concerns due to the burned-out trees. Technically they were supposed to camp where they had the permit. But due to the safety concerns I was able to provide some guidance about their options based on the information I had of people camping at Limber Pine. I felt the visitors appreciated the information in helping to decide what to do.

The education we provide in visitor contacts goes a long way toward protecting the resource. For example, many visitors do not have permits. When I explain how the permit process helps them by limiting crowds or for their protection in the event of fire, along with how easy they are to get, I hear genuinely positive comments that they will be sure to get one the next time.

One of the sessions I attended thought the National Skills institute was "WISDOM: A six-step process for Effective Public contacts and Authority of the Resource Technique."

I found this helpful, not only from the perspective of the actual six-step process, but more about what kind of impression do you want to leave the visitor with. The session included volunteers, but also those who could write citations.

An example was someone camping illegally. The approach was to explain that they are in the path of a moose (not in California) that comes down in the evening to get water from a lake. By them camping there it could discourage the moose, therefore it would be better to camp in one of the designated



Paul Valiukas

spots. The thinking this was a much better visitor contact than simply writing a citation.

George Crusoe, an 8-year volunteer

Hiking through the untamed wilderness alone fills my heart with memories of family and close friends. I can often feel their spirits in hummingbirds, red tailed hawks, eagles, owls, deer, bighorn and even brother bear.

Often I share information with people I meet on the trail about water locations, give directions with the use of a map, and share stories, all with a smile, because these people are just like me.

These adventurers are seeking something extraordinary, like others who have gone before them, inside the wilderness below Old Greyback. I just guide them so hopefully they can find it, too.



George Crusoe / Photo by Lorien Sanders

Can you see yourself in pictures?

We certainly hope so.

Work has begun on the 2022 yearbook and we need photos of you from the trails and interpretive activities this season.

Please send them to yearbook editor Bettye Miller at gorgoniogal@gmail.com by Friday, Sept. 9.





President's Corner Rex Philpot

With the heat in our inland valleys this summer, no better place to get away and enjoy the mountains than in our beautiful wilderness. So many trails to explore, from peak bagging to enjoying the cold water of a mountain stream. The landscape is diverse from the shade of the forests to the regeneration of the burn areas.

The landscape in the burn areas has changed. The regeneration of the forest has started. Nature has started the healing process. As you hike the trails in our wilderness, saunter through. Look for the rebirth of nature.

A big shout out to all the volunteers on our trail crews. They have done an awesome job this

summer. There has been no shortage of work with Forsee Creek and San Bernardino trails both opening this spring after the El Dorado fire of 2020. This has been a record year for tree removal and tread work.

All our volunteers do an awesome job. From Big Falls to Barton Flats. I want to personally thank you for your dedication and hard work. It is appreciated.

I leave you with a quote from John Muir:
"Wilderness is a necessity ... there must be places for human beings to satisfy their souls."

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