

Wilderness Link

San Geronio Wilderness Association

November 2021

Volume 9, Issue 3

Calendar of Events

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

November

30 Board of Directors meeting
Election of officers

December

4 Holiday Party

January

tbd Board planning meeting

February

22 Board of Directors meeting
25-26 Banff Mountain Film Festival

March

29 Board of Directors meeting
Election of directors

April

26 Board of Directors meeting

May

tbd Orientation Day
28 Barton Flats Visitor Center opens
Ranger Talks begin
31 Board of Directors meeting

Volunteers Wrap Up a Successful Season

By Bettye Miller
and Val Silva

SGWA celebrated the end of another successful season at the annual awards potluck on Oct. 9, a season that was a welcome change from 2020 when the El Dorado and Apple fires closed the San Geronio Wilderness for two months and Covid safety protocols limited volunteer activities until this spring.

Our volunteers donated more than 11,300 hours during the 2021 season, a contribution which the U.S. Forest Service calculates is equivalent to nearly \$323,000. Approximately 120 volunteers contributed hours in and around the San Geronio and Cucamonga Wilderness areas, working to protect and clean the forest, improve facilities and trails, and help about 18,000 visitors appreciate and enjoy the forest.

The online wilderness permit system we developed this year is popular with hikers for the ease and speed of obtaining day and overnight permits. More than 6,900 permits were issued between June 1, when the system went live, and Sept. 1, when the forest was closed. The new system allows SGWA to provide updates about information important to hikers such as water availability and bear activity, and enables immediate safety warnings such as the September closure of national forests in California due to extreme fire danger.

See Successful Season on page 3



Trail boss David Bratt helps rebuild a rock wall on the Falls Creek Trail in August. Photo by Nelva Valladares

Smile and Help SGWA



If you shop on Amazon this holiday season please use smile.Amazon.com and designate the San Gorgonio Wilderness Association as the charity to benefit from your purchases. SGWA has received more than \$1,400 so far this year because of purchases made this way.

2021 Board of Directors

President: Bettye Miller
Vice President: Rex Philpot
Secretary: Dee McCoy
Treasurer: Rosy Nuñez
Directors: David Bratt, Chelsey Feierfeil,
Eileen Hay, Curt Lindemer, Roxanne Smith,
Bob Williams

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 December 2019. 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

Corporate

Adventure 16
Boeing
Corona Tools
Edison International
REI
San Manuel Band of
Mission Indians
WilderNext Corp.

Lifetime

Santa Ana River Cabins
Assn.
Elick Bowler Family
David Brisban
Allan Chang
Bud Cole
Brigitte Denver
Bob Hazelton
David Knapp
Peggy Manning
Bettye Miller
Robert Oetzel
Bob Opperman
Karen Saffle
Dan Scott
Mark Voykovic
Scott Warden
Bryan Walton
Jarome Wilson

President's Summit Team

Rex Brown
Greg Craft
Linda Griffith
Terry Grill
Beth Gunn
Robert Hazelton
Shauna Hoffman
Alison Hill
Jim Hill

Walt & Suzie Kirkwood

Bob Oppermann
Audrey Scranton
Steffan Slater
Ted Sledzinski
Scott Warden
B.J. Withall
Ernie Woodhouse
Christian Wuflestad

Trail Blazer

Quentin Allison
Tammy Barta
Dulce Becerra
Franklin Becerra
Jodi Biers
Robbie Bishop
Laurie Borer
Patricia Carelli
Sandra Figueroa
Shane Franklin
Ayme Frykman
Daniel Garcia
Terry Grill
Deborah Harrison
Mike Hawker
Carl Imthurn
Paul Lambert
Anna Lee
Justin Palmer
Joyce Palmese
Walker Price
Danielle Purdey
Stephanie Ramsey
Michael Richman
Summer Rossel
Shelley Russell
Marianne Shuster
Caitlin Smith
Shannon Stratton

Paula Taylor

Robin Thuemler
Juli Unternaehrer
Catherine Walsh
Kathryn Wood
Kenneth Wright

Family

Fast Track Capital
Management

Individual

Adrienne Allegretti
Judy Atkinson
Jonathan Baty
John Berlette
Jeffrey Boehler
Heather Broersma
Scott Brovsky
Mark Campbell
Tricia Carelli
Ashleigh Covarrubias
Donna Crawford
Shannon Cwikla
Daniel Domancich
Juliann Emmons
Margaret Floyd-Evans
Linda Foster
Bertram Froehly
Gwyn Frost
Ewa Graves
Ezra Greenhouse
Matthew Hall
Kevin Harvey
Viviane Helmig
Shauna Hoffman
Molly Leddy
Joanne Lessard
Curtis Lindemer
Elisabeth Longo
Jim Matiko

Hannah McAnespie

Michael McCoy
Stephen McCrea
Seth McLaughlin
Shan McNaughton
Sarah Mellon
Kevin Merison
Marc Nurre
Kevin Proctor
Penny Ramos
James Rasco
Sean Reed
Kerry Rennie
Ralph Riggan
Phil Rosenkrantz
Rachel Sahl
Heath Sawyer
Matthew Schreiner
David Schumacher
Deborah Seibly
Patricia Shearer
Steffan Slater
Caitlin Smith
Sandra Smith
Frank Sprinkle
Ann-Marie Stauble
Brandon Swanson
Katy Swift
Troy Sykes
Paula Taylor
Amanda Tromblay
Vincent Van Rooijen
Catherine Walsh
Daniel White
Kipi Wilson-Lee
Brian Wolk
Kathryn Wood
Caroline Wright



Jean Rogers, Sheila McMahon and Gayle Haro (l-r) were among more than a dozen volunteers who assisted nearly 1,500 visitors at the Barton Flats Visitor Center in 2021.

Successful Season ...

Continued from page 1

Trail crews tackled a variety of projects in the San Gorgonio and Cucamonga Wilderness areas. They cleared 431 trees and repaired 36,905 feet of tread, which included removing brush and shoring up trails by hauling tons of rock by hand to build rock walls.

Patrol volunteers monitored water availability in the back country, advised backpackers about the need for permits, dismantled 106 illegal fire rings, and picked up more than 150 bags of trash.

Interpretive programs educated more than 9,900 visitors about fire safety, Leave No Trace ethics, and how to appreciate and share the forest with the plants and animals that live there. The Barton Flats Visitor Center served nearly 1,500 people; volunteers at the Big Falls Recreation Area talked to more than 6,800 visitors; and front desk staff at the Mill Creek Ranger Station assisted nearly 1,000 visitors. Several volunteers participated in surveying Heritage Sites, confirming and identifying artifacts for the Forest Service.

Every Saturday evening during the summer, campers in the Barton Flats area gathered in the Greyback Amphitheater to hear SGWA volunteers share their passion for the forest and explain what everyone can do to help protect it. Ranger Talks drew more than 680 people in 2021.

In August the Forest Festival drew more than 300 people to the Barton Flats Visitor Center to learn

about the forest, the wilderness and SGWA activities. Among the popular activities, as always, were sawing tree cookies and panning for gold, as well as admiring a great horned owl from the Big Bear Alpine Zoo and making nature crafts.

Thank you for making this a great season!

The 300+ Club

These volunteers each donated more than 300 hours of service during the 2021 season.

Mike Bigness topped the list of volunteers in terms of hours donated with nearly 900 hours! Mike is well-known at Big Falls Recreation Area, where he keeps order in the parking lot and explains to visitors why it's dangerous to climb the falls.

Part of the success of SGWA's trail maintenance program is due to **David Bratt**, who donated more than 710 hours. He is an active trail boss and trail surveyor, and sits on the SGWA Board of Directors.

John Howell is an all-season patrol volunteer who donated more than 620 hours, spending most of his time at Dry Lake. Hikers appreciated his up-to-date information about water sources and bear activity.

Bob Williams contributed more than 530 hours and is SGWA's volunteer coordinator, scheduling trail patrols and sending weekly reports to the Forest Service. He also serves on the Board of Directors and works on trail projects.

President **Betty Miller** donated more than 450 hours in 2021. She volunteers at the Barton Flats Visitor Center, writes grant proposals, is editor of the quarterly newsletter and yearbook, and co-chaired the Forest Festival this year.

Roxanne Smith manages volunteer staffing at the Mill Creek Visitor Center Front Desk. She donated more than 415 hours this season, assisting visitors and serving on the SGWA Board of Directors.

When SGWA was asked in May to resume Ranger Talks at the Greyback Amphitheater **Jean Rogers** stepped up to manage the program. She also volunteered at the Barton Flats Visitor Center, donating more than 360 hours.

Dan Scott contributed more than 335 hours patrolling trails in the San Gorgonio Wilderness, particularly at Dry Lake. He also programmed new radios for SGWA.

Eileen Hay, SGWA's trails coordinator, donated more than 300 hours this year. She organized trail maintenance projects and led trail crews in an especially productive season. She also serves on the SGWA Board of Directors.



Director's Desk Val Silva

What an excellent year this has been! Despite the wilderness being closed last year and Covid closures of offices, SGWA had a bright new season. We had a record number of new volunteers stepping up, providing trail work, trail patrols, and visitor information.

It has been exciting to see first-time users in the wilderness and forest, many of whom have been cooped up in their homes and were looking for some outdoor activities. SGWA volunteers have helped educate them on wilderness ethics, Leave no Trace principles, and the beauty of the wilderness and surrounding areas, thus increasing positivity of their wilderness experience.

We hope in the future they will continue to use the wilderness and forest to get back to nature, and relieve the stress of day-to-day living.

Thanks to all the volunteers who make this happen. Every one of you has contributed in some way.

SGWA is so fortunate to have volunteers who enjoy such diverse opportunities to help people. Whether it's greeting people at our visitor centers or Big Falls. Presenting programs to the public, or doing trail work, patrolling trails and maintaining our web and permit site. You have made a difference.

Save the Date for Banff

SGWA will host the Banff Mountain Film Festival on Feb. 25-26, 2022, at the Fox Event Center in downtown Redlands. Keep an eye out for emails containing additional information.

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

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Submit story ideas and photos to sgwa@earthlink.net
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Outstanding Chipmunks

Nine first-year volunteers, aka "chipmunks," each contributed more than 100 hours in 2021. They patrolled trails, joined trail crews, and helped out at the Forest Festival. They were awesome!

These volunteers are:



Top, l-r, Lorne Cheeseman, Bryan Clabeaux, Greg Craft; middle, l-r, Antonio Huerta, Kent Johnson, Luisa Moya; bottom, Nelva Valladares. Not pictured: Rex Brown and Margo Johnson

Honoring Years of Service

Three volunteers were recognized at the awards potluck for their many years of service to SGWA – John Flippin, 35 years; Sheila McMahon, 30 years; and Phil Rosenkrantz, 25 years.



John Flippin's attention to detail has served SGWA well as a member of the Board of Directors and a trail boss.



Wonder what a Jeffrey pine smells like? Visit the Barton Flats Visitor Center when Sheila McMahon is on duty and you'll find out.



Phil Rosenkrantz is a friendly face patrolling the wilderness and an informative presenter of Ranger Talks.

2021 in Pictures



Photo by David Bratt



Photo by Eileen Hay



Photo by John Flippin



Photo by David Christian



Photo by Domenic Wager



President's Corner

Bettye Miller

Congratulations on another successful season! It felt good to get back to almost-normal.

The year was full of highlights we can all be proud of. Trails coordinator Eileen Hay and her team of trail bosses introduced a new training program for trail crews that was highly successful, both in skills taught and in the retention of new volunteers.

Nearly a third of first-time volunteers put in more than 100 hours each this season, a first for SGWA. Our trail crews were especially productive, removing more than 430 trees from trails and clearing or repairing nearly 7 miles of tread.

Patrol and interpretive volunteers continued the important work of keeping the hiking public safe and providing vital information about trail conditions and Leave No Trace principles, all in the hope that others will become good stewards of the wilderness we love.

Executive Directors Val Silva led the development of an online permit system for the San Geronio Wilderness that is so successful that the Forest Service asked us to include the Cucamonga Wilderness as well. This system has been well-received by hikers, and it's free, unlike online wilderness permit systems elsewhere in the country. We are trailblazers in the digital and the natural world.

Because of you SGWA remains the model for wilderness preservation organizations in the country.

SGWA

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Serve

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Educate