

### Our Heartfelt Thoughts to Those Affected by the Recent Tragedies in Our Area...

Dear Friends,

Our hearts are heavy with the terrible events of the past week, and we hope that you, your families and your homes are safe.

Fire damage to the COSCA Open Space is extensive and will be assessed in the days and weeks ahead. ALL trails and open space areas will remain closed at this time. Please respect these closures. As areas open, we will send you updates via email and post news on our Facebook page.

We are committed to working with COSCA in every possible way. The need for volunteer and financial support for restoration will be great. Please consider making a donation today.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors  
CONEJO OPEN SPACE FOUNDATION



[Donate](#)

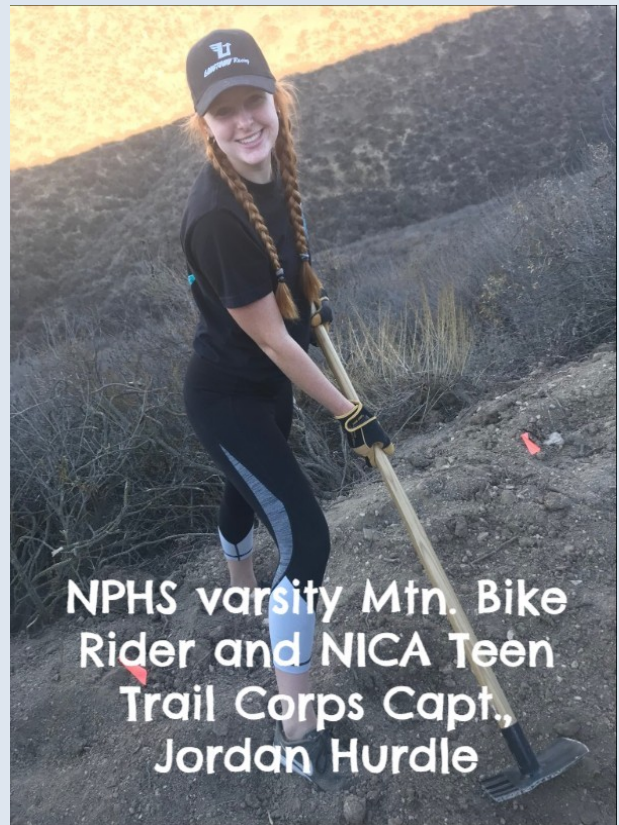
[Volunteer](#)

Thank you for being a supporter of our local open space. We hope you will find this newsletter informative, interesting, and helpful, and we welcome article ideas, submissions, photos, and queries from all of our readers. You can contact us with your comments here:

[newsletter@cosf.org](mailto:newsletter@cosf.org) .

**Fall Trail Work Day  
By: Dorothy Sullivan**

On a hot Saturday in October, eight trail crew leaders took 80 volunteers into the open space above the Westlake Village YMCA. Together they completed about a half mile section of new trail. This was the third Trail Work Day at this location (previous dates were in May and June), working on a loop from the YMCA that will also connect to existing trails, Saddle Pass and Bowfield. There were a number of groups/organizations represented including the Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council (who also provided the trail leaders), Boys Teen Charity League, Newbury Park High School mountain bike team, Sierra Club Task Force from L.A., and Concerned Off-Road Bicyclist Association to name a few.



Lunch was catered by El Sancho Loco taco cart.

This seemed to be a big hit for the hungry volunteers. In addition to sponsoring the lunch, COSF provided several gift cards to local businesses as raffle prizes. COSCA also donated some gift items for the raffle, and there were a lot of happy winners!

COSCA rangers were especially pleased with the work that was accomplished. They worked themselves - overseeing the event, some doing trail work, and others making several trips from the registration area up the trail providing additional water and snacks to the volunteers. Thank you to everyone who participated!

**Trail Trivia: On the Fringes  
By: John Kross**

There are trail heads in our open space that, through no fault of their own, are not shown on the maps you find at our trail heads. The reason? They don't quite fit, due to scale. They are on the fringes.

If we tried to fit some areas in, we'd have to "zoom out" in order to cover the larger area. Because most of our maps are 8.5" x 14" in an effort to balance extent with detail, zooming out would end up in a loss of some detail. A great example of this is the Sunset Hills trailhead on



the west end of Erbes Road (about 3/4 mile before you get to Olsen Rd.). Although the trailhead is near the overall area covered by the Lang Ranch/Woodridge trail map, trying to squeeze it on the page would crowd some of the other information already included.

Fortunately we do not have those limitations online; there is an excellent trail guide in the Conejo Open Space Foundation's website. Check out this link and explore away: <https://cosf.org/trails/>

**Conejo Open Space Bird Study**  
**By: Anna Huber, COSCA Planner**

COSF recently donated \$2,500 to COSCA to help fund a bird monitoring program COSCA initiated this year. COSF has also committed up to \$2,000 each year for 2019 and 2020. The monitoring will be conducted by the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology (WFVZ) and will provide valuable scientific information regarding baseline population, distribution, and density data for birds breeding in (and on migration to) these locations. WFVZ will track resident and migrating passerine bird species, some non-passerine species, Federally- and State-listed species, and species that are candidates for listing. The monitoring data will also provide information on locations and occurrences of species of special concern, trends in all breeding species' densities, and inform management activities. If you wish to donate to COSF to support projects like this one, please visit <https://cosf.org/donate/>



**Spotlight on...**

**Who:** John Kross, trail rambler, COSTAC/COSF volunteer, SMMTC board member

**Day job:** My involvement with various trails and trail maintenance planning activities keeps me busy day to day. Trail maintenance is a weekly, sometimes bi-weekly, and sometimes several consecutive days event for me. I usually go to Santa Cruz and/or Santa Rosa Island (Channel Islands) twice a year for several days at a time to do trail maintenance. Days such as COSCA Trail Work Days (we had three this year) require

pre-work, so for me they are usually events for which the planning may stretch over a couple of weeks.

In addition, I coordinate the Adopt-A-Trail program, one of three wonderful COSF volunteer

programs geared to get the community involved with our open space and enjoy the more than 150 miles of trails that COSCA has to offer (the other two volunteer programs are Trail Watch and Trail Ambassador).

**Why is open space important to you?** Open space is important to me, as it should be to everyone else, because of the mental and physical health benefits that open space has been demonstrated to have. On the trails, I get the feeling of spiritual renewal, of well-being, and a sense of harmony with nature. I also feel the responsibility to protect the habitats that are disappearing because of urban encroachment. Open space provides the needed habitat for mammals, birds, insects, and last but not least, seeds to survive.

**What skills do you bring to COSF and/or Conejo Valley open space?** I originally got involved with COSF when I volunteered for Trails Education Days several years ago. It was an opportunity to share my love of the trails and the nature that surrounds them with groups of 9 and 10 year olds. How fun! Do they all listen? No, but if I grab the attention of three or four out of a dozen I feel I have accomplished something. My project management skills come in handy any time we have an event that I either organize or participate in.

**What do you like to do in open space?** I am a hiker, I like to visit the trails I know, and I like to explore the ones I don't. I enjoy looking at the wild flowers in the spring, learning their names and as I hike along, learn the various locations where they live (our open space is a mosaic of micro climates).

**Where's your favorite place in to be in Conejo open space?** I am partial in this respect, Elliott Mountain, my adopted trail, is my favorite. Getting to it is a hike, but that's the whole idea!

**What are your hopes for the future of COSF and/or Conejo Valley open space?** We still have potential for additional trails to be built. They will only serve to enhance our enjoyment of the open space. One of the remarkable traits of COSCA trails is that a very large majority of them are multi-use, so they can be enjoyed by runners, hikers, bikers, and equestrians. I hope this continues.

**Any other thoughts or words of wisdom?** We must remember that preserving nature might extend humankind's own survival on this planet. The open space helps us understand the habitats that surround us, which are the essence of our larger environment.

### **Building Team Work and Giving Back to the Community**

**By: Jerry Westby**

On the morning of October 10th, 15 volunteers from SAGE Publishing in Thousand Oaks enthusiastically helped advance the development of the new Wishbone Trail above the Westlake YMCA. Organized by the Conejo Open Space



Foundation, and with the help of several COSCA Rangers and John Kross, SAGE volunteers worked on over a mile of new trail in several sections.

Not only was it a nice opportunity to escape their desks for a morning of good exercise and a scenic hike, most of the SAGE volunteers echoed the same comments – they use the trails with friends and family for hiking, running, and biking, so they were happy to aid in the construction of a new trail. All who took part considered the event a great success!

COSF is looking forward to continuing our mutually rewarding relationship with SAGE in 2019 with future volunteer days. On behalf of COSF and the COSCA Rangers, thanks again to all the SAGE volunteers!



## Come Visit the New Sapwi Trails Community Park!

Sapwi Trails Community Park opened in September, and if you haven't been there yet, it's time to go! Sapwi has 145 acres, with trails for hiking, biking, and horseback riding; an off-road bike park; a disk golf course; a picnic area with benches; a cross-country running course; a non-motorized sail plane area; a children's playground; and a skate park. But don't just take it from us, read and see more here:



[http://www.crpd.org/parkfac/parks/sapwi\\_trails\\_community\\_park.asp](http://www.crpd.org/parkfac/parks/sapwi_trails_community_park.asp)

## Meet our New Board Members!



### Tasha Spangler

Tasha grew up in the Conejo Valley, along with her 3 siblings. After graduating from Pepperdine, she developed a love for trail running. When she isn't busy running around on the local trails with her dog, Cooper, you can find her teaching at a local elementary school. During her years as a 4th grade teacher she was able to participate and enjoy Trail Education Days.

Tasha hopes to spread interest and awareness of the beautiful open space, while serving on the Conejo Open Space Foundation (COSF). She has adopted the Lizard Rock Trail in Wildwood

and also works as a Trail Watch volunteer.

### Giancarlo Hamner

Giancarlo is a Conejo Valley native and has always valued the beauty he is surrounded by. Throughout his youth he spent numerous weekends camping, fishing, boating, hiking, and backpacking throughout California with the Boy Scouts, and even earned his Eagle Scout rank. Some of the projects he has engaged in were rebuilding the staircase that leads to Paradise Falls in our very own Wildwood Park, building a retaining wall on the trail leading to



the Falls, and working to fix a trail for local hikers. Giancarlo is well familiar with the COSCA open space and trail system. He is a trail runner, taking advantage of the COSCA trails in his Dos Vientos neighborhood. Giancarlo graduated from California State University Channel Islands and is now a Financial Advisor in Westlake Village.

You can read the bios of all COSF Board members here:

[https://cosf.org/about\\_us/board-of-directors/](https://cosf.org/about_us/board-of-directors/)

### **Dogs in the Open Spaces**

A friendly reminder to keep your dog safe on the trail year round. All dogs must be kept on-leash, per the COSCA Ordinance, section 223. Be a good neighbor... not everyone likes dogs, and people can be injured by loose dogs. Loose dogs get into more fights with other dogs and animals. Dogs that leave the trails destroy the homes of ground-nesting birds, stress small animals, destroy native plants, leave feces that disrupts the eco-system, and are susceptible to the rabies virus. Please see this helpful brochure from COSCA for more information:



[http://www.conejo-openspace.org/assets/dog\\_brochure\\_20161123.pdf](http://www.conejo-openspace.org/assets/dog_brochure_20161123.pdf)

### **You're Invited!**

The monthly CRPD Open Space Appreciation Hikes are a fun way to and meet fellow outdoor enthusiasts while hiking and exploring our beautiful trails. Come join us! Information may be found here:

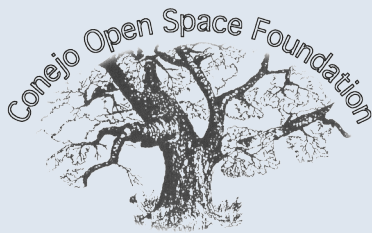


[http://www.conejo-openspace.org/assets/2018\\_osa\\_hikes.pdf](http://www.conejo-openspace.org/assets/2018_osa_hikes.pdf)

## Want to Volunteer? Here's How!

The COSCA Volunteer Corps has many ways for residents to help maintain and preserve the open space that surrounds our beautiful Conejo Valley. By joining with others, we can make sure that the trails, canyons, and ridgelines will be enjoyed by visitors for generations to come. You can read about the specific volunteer opportunities below, and you can submit a request to volunteer, noting your specific interests, [here](#).

- [Adopt-a-Trail Program](#)
- [Trail Watch Program](#)
- [Trail Ambassador Program](#)
- [Trail Work Days](#)
- [Trails Education Days](#)



The Conejo Open Space Foundation was formed in 1995 to promote and maintain the open space and trail system of the Conejo Valley and to educate residents as to their roles as custodians and protectors of the open space and the environment. Our [web site](#) illustrates ongoing Conejo Open Space programs supported by the Foundation that help preserve and protect our precious open space.

Follow us on social media



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