

As many of us know, spending time alone or with family or friends while hiking, running and biking in the hills and mountains can lead to significant health benefits. Studies have shown that exercising in open space can improve blood pressure, boost mental health, and decrease the risk of illness.

On March 18th new orders were issued by Ventura County closing gyms and fitness centers. They also ruled that residents equal to or older than 75 years of age, or equal to or older than 70 years of age with an active or chronic disease or condition seek shelter at their place of residence from March 18th to April 1st. On March 19, Governor Newsom instituted even stricter orders.



Adhering to the state and county rules and CDC hygiene instructions is the best defense for reducing our chances of contracting or transmitting the coronavirus. However, for most of us it doesn't mean that enjoying our open space is prohibited. With school closings and children at home, getting out is a wonderful and healthy option. If we want to hike or run or bike on the trails, let's observe the following:

- Avoid shaking hands or other close contact with others.
- Keep at least six feet between you and other hikers, runners, and bikers
- Avoid sharing food, water bottles and equipment.
- Avoid or minimize carpooling to and from trailheads.
- Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing and use the crook of your arm or a tissue (dispose of it using "leave no trace" principles.)
- Avoid congregating in groups along the trail.
- If you begin feeling sick, stay away from others and remain at home until examined and cleared for return by a medical professional.
- Finally, be kind and humble; don't imagine you know more than public health experts and don't do anything that may endanger others.

We will get through this and return to normalcy, but in the meantime, we can offset the negative effects of social isolation by responsibly enjoying our open space. Stay well!

Jerry Westby
President, COSF

Donate



Spring has definitely sprung in the Conejo Valley! We hope that you get out there and take this "Advice From a Trail"... Walk into beauty, stay on your path, find inspiration around every turn, tread lightly, pack life with good memories, every day has its ups and downs, and watch your step! As always, thank you for continuing to support the Conejo Open Space with your volunteering hours and/or your financial support.

Volunteer



**Trail Trivia: Alapay Trail
By: Christina Robertson**

"Alapay" is a Chumash word for "sky" or "a world above". An elevation gain of 750 feet and stellar views at the top give an understanding of how the Alapay Trail got its name. This 3 mile round trip has a steady incline if you begin at the trailhead at Lang Ranch Parkway. The Alapay Trail begins just 1/2 mile from the mail trailhead along the Albertson Motorway. It continues for one mile. Enjoy the beautiful views from the top!

The Alapay Trail is one of ten hikes in the Conejo Open Space Challenge (see flyer in this newsletter for more details!)

Another Captivating COSF Speaker Series Talk!

On Thursday night, February 27th, an enthusiastic crowd of 200 attended Harry Medved's talk on movie filming in the Conejo Valley! Harry talked about dozens of movies that had been filmed in our open space when it mostly consisted of ranch lands. Western movies, war movies, period pieces, Elvis flicks, even Back to the Future III were filmed here. Tales of filming classics like Spartacus above what is now the California Lutheran University campus and Bonnie and Clyde's final scenes on Westlake Blvd. were fascinating. He explained the allure of the Conejo Valley to the big Hollywood studios. His film clips of many of these movies, including photos of what the locations look like now, were wildly popular.



Many thanks to all who attended to make this such a successful evening, and to those who donated to the Foundation to support our work! We hope to see you again at our next Speaker Series event on May 14th with Joey Algiers.



Fire, Weeds and Sprawl: Challenges in the Open Space May 14, 2020 at the Grant Brimhall Library Guest Speaker: Joey Algiers

In his presentation, Joey Algiers, restoration ecologist with the National Park Service, will discuss restoration efforts in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and how they apply to the work COSCA is planning in the Conejo Valley. The Santa Monica

Mountains National Recreation Area, the world's largest urban national park, faces a number of challenges including fire and invasive species. Fire provides opportunity for invasive species to quickly colonize opened surface areas, potentially changing native plant communities and preventing the re-establishment of sensitive habitat. In his talk, Joey will share some of his research and how the work NPS has done over the past decade has helped preserve and protect natural resources in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

If public health issues due to the COVID-19 virus mandate a schedule change, COSF will provide updates thru email and social media. Stay safe and well everyone!

In Loving Memory: Julia Osborn-Gourley



Julia Osborn-Gourley passed away while on an archaeological tour in Ethiopia on January 23, 2020. A life-long environmentalist and nature lover, Julie was appointed to COSTAC and the COSF board in 1997. She served as COSF secretary for several years, then as president from 2003 through 2013. Through the years, Julie worked tirelessly for Trails Education Days, was deeply committed to Resource Management projects, and was instrumental in the creation of the Adopt-A-Trail program. She also served as a Trail Watch volunteer and participated in countless trail work events.

Following Julie's 2017 retirement from the COSF board, the directors "Adopted an Oak Tree" in her honor. The tree is located near the planned bridge in the Conejo Canyons Open Space, which is particularly fitting since Julie long advocated for the construction of a bridge in that area.

COSF has established a Memorial Fund in Julie's name. All donations will be directed to the National Wildlife Federation fund for the Liberty Canyon Wildlife Crossing. The foundation donated to the fund last year, and Julie was pleased with our involvement. To add your support, please go to cosf.org/donate, or mail a check to: COSF, P.O. Box 2113, Thousand Oaks, CA 91358.

Julie was greatly loved by many people and will be missed!

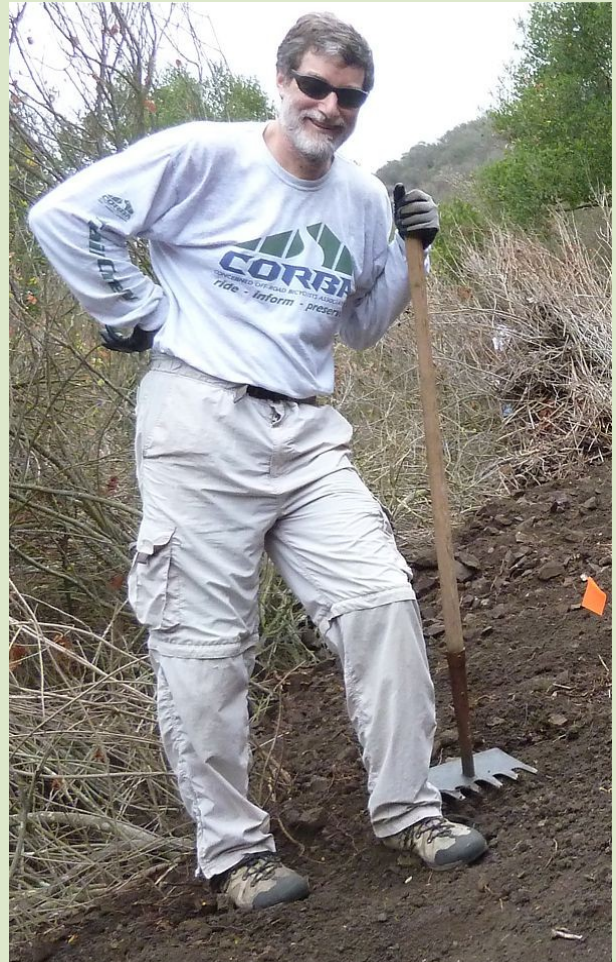
Spotlight on...

Steve Clark is a very tech savvy and active member of the Conejo Open Space Foundation. Since joining the board, he has completely made over our website, updating it regularly and making blog posts. He has dedicated countless hours to making our website look amazing and has made it easy to use. There is so much that he does for the website, most of us couldn't begin to list it all, or even understand what any of it is! Steve is also very active on the trail and participates in trail work days both for the Conejo Open Space and the Santa

Monica Mountains. He is also an active member of CORBA (Concerned Off Road Bicyclists Association) and is on the board of the Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council. We are so grateful for his many contributions to the Conejo Open Space.

Tell us about yourself (your day job, hobbies, how you spend your spare time). When did you join the COSF board and why?

I moved to Thousand Oaks in 1993 to join Amgen in the new department of Computational Biology as a 'bioinformaticist'. I retired in 2007. Now I split my time between computer work and enjoying the outdoors. I like to ride my mountain bike on the local trails, or sometimes to hike. Also I travel the to various places in the Southwest to see the sights there, whether mountain biking, hiking or riding my motorbike on jeep trails to get to the most remote viewpoints. On the computer, I am webmaster for three websites: COSF.org, CORBA.com and my own VenturaCountyTrails.org. In the evening, I am usually watching a movie at home. I joined the COSF board in 2017 to give back to the community that provides so much to all of us.



Why is open space important to you?

I like open space for its opportunities for recreation, socializing with other enthusiasts, and as a refuge from daily stresses where you can relax your thoughts and let them wander. It also provides attractive views for the community and a place for wildlife to live and travel through.

What skills do you bring to COSF and/or the Conejo Open Space?

In addition to my computer background that allows me to work on the website and other necessary information technologies, I am a trail work crew leader and encourage volunteers to come out during the annual Spring and Fall trail work days to help keep the trails in good shape. Without volunteers to help, our trails would fall into disrepair and eventually would become impassible. Nature does everything it can to reclaim the trails for herself.

What do you like to do in the open space?

I like to explore trails that are new to me, especially to look at a trail in the distance and say "I wonder where that goes." I know I will find out in due course.

What are your hopes for the future of COSF and/or the Conejo Open Space?

COSCA is doing an incredible job for us in providing open space and trails to access them, and their rangers are all incredibly helpful and friendly. Nevertheless, I would like to see more rangers so they can better help the ever increasing number of open space visitors to have an enjoyable and safe experience on our trails.

Any other thoughts or words of wisdom?

I encourage people to travel the trails to help them get more exercise and peace of mind!

2020 Conejo Open Space Challenge



If you are online, Click on the trail name below to display a map with the trail highlighted:

Conejo Canyons, [Lichen Trail](#)

Conejo Canyons, [Plateau Rim Trail](#)

Dos Vientos, [El Rincon Trail](#)

Dos Vientos, [Sierra Vista Trail](#)

Lake Eleanor OS, [Lake Eleanor Trail](#)

Lang Ranch, [Alapay Trail](#)

Lang Ranch, [Beargrass Trail](#)

Lang Ranch, [Hidden Meadow Trail](#)

Los Robles, [Ceanothus Trail](#)

Los Robles, [Triunfo Canyon Trail](#)

If you are offline, maps are available at cosf.org/openspace/maps/ and cosf.org/trails/other-trails/easy-lake-eleanor-open-space-hike/.

The 9th Annual Challenge runs March 1 – May 31, 2020

Hike, run, or ride (bike or horse) each trail from 3/1/20 to 5/31/20. Share your photos via Twitter or Instagram with tag [#coschallenge](#) or email them or a link to a GPS track to coschallenge@gmail.com for validation.

Win prizes donated by our awesome **sponsors** (give them shout-outs with your photos) by completing all 10 trails, which enters you in the raffle. Attend the post-event party (more info to come) to see if you won.

Follow all posted rules, do not hike/run/ride when trails are muddy or closed, and stay safe. This is not a race, so take your time and enjoy the experience.

There is no fee to participate in the Challenge. You can support the Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency (COSCA) by making a tax-deductible donation to the Conejo Open Space Foundation (COSF) at cosf.org/donate. COSCA is the agency entrusted with preserving, protecting, and managing the open space resources in the Conejo Valley, including management and maintenance of the trails in this Challenge. For more information about COSCA, visit conejo-openspace.org or facebook.com/ConejoOpenSpace/.

Our Challenge Sponsors:



Click [here](#) to see the flyer with working links to the challenge trails!

Spring Trail Work Day Is Canceled Due to the Coronavirus Pandemics



Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency's

SPRING

TRAIL WORK DAY

Saturday, March 21, 2020

Wildwood Regional Park - Inner Lot

928 W. Avenida de los Arboles

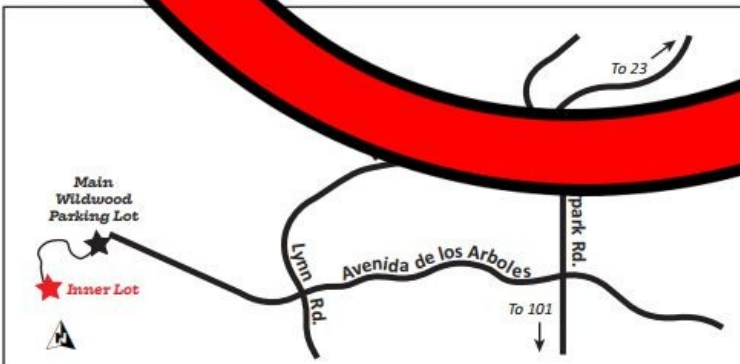
Remember! Bring your own water bottle, wear sturdy shoes & appropriate attire!

Meet at Inner Lot

Check-in at registration table
Complete sign-in & release form

8:00 AM Trail Work Day begins with safety instruction
Rangers direct teams to work sites

Noon: You Lunch



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Volunteer
treated
to lunch

Drawin
& pri

& Updates:

conejo-openspace.org

cosf.org

Ranger Office:
805-381-2741

COSCA Update:

Did you know that COSCA got a new logo? The picture on the left shows their cool, new design that you will start seeing on all of their official documents, signs, ranger trucks, etc! We love the image of Lizard Rock in the background and the vibrant colors.



In other news, COSCA reached an agreement with the Ventura County Parks Department to make parking at the Santa Rosa Valley Park FREE! Once the new bridge gets built, COSCA anticipates more visitors in the Hill Canyon area, and the county's lot is a convenient second option once COSCA's gravel lot gets full. There are also restrooms and picnic tables there. The agreement is really a partnership that extends beyond just free parking, it expands the level of service for the park and has wide-ranging benefits to the communities surrounding the park. The park and added parking will provide access to three large open space areas that include about 3,600 acres. Partnering with the County was more cost-effective than building and maintaining more free parking outside of the park. Thank you, COSCA for picking up the parking fee tab!





COSCA recently partnered with the Oak Park High School Fire Prevention Club to plant thousands of acorns at the Lang Ranch Open Space. Brian Stark, COSCA Administrator said, "We focused on the areas where we experienced our greatest losses of oak trees. This is part of our effort to recover from fire damage and provide for the coming generations of local wildlife that depend on oak trees for food and habitat. COSCA is grateful for the help from the Club and the volunteers they coordinated for the help."

Accidental Poisoning of Wildlife and Pets by Rodenticides

Anticoagulant rodenticides take a huge toll on wildlife. Bobcats, coyotes, mountain lions and raptors - as well as household pets - often die from secondary poisoning when they eat rodents that have ingested rat poison. The City of Thousand Oaks stopped using these poisons in 2015. Businesses and homeowners are urged to use alternative control methods as well. For suggestions, visit <https://www.toaks.org/departments/public-works/sustainability/landscaping/rodent-control>. Help save our ecosystem and encourage others to do the same!



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.

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