

LOS PADRES FORESTWATCH

PROTECTING WILDLIFE AND WILD PLACES ALONG CALIFORNIA'S CENTRAL COAST

FALL 2017



Long-eared Owl Fledgling in Juniper
Bill Bouton



LOOKING ACROSS THE FOREST

AN UPDATE ON HOW WE'RE PROTECTING YOUR REGION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BASE CAMP 1

THE HERD GROWS 2

LEAKED REPORT: CARRIZO PLAIN SAFE? 2

OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR THE CARRIZO 2

BIGGEST, WILDEST *OJAI WILD!* EVER! 3

WILDERNESS LEGACY AWARD: THE THACHER SCHOOL 3

THANK YOU: *OJAI WILD!* SPONSORS 4

SAN JOAQUIN KIT FOX 5

CARRIZO PLAIN FEATURED AT OUR SUMMER EVENTS 5

VOLUNTEERS CLEAN UP SITES AROUND THE FOREST 6

SANTA PAULA CANYON UPDATE 7

LEGISLATION THREATENS LOS PADRES NATIONAL FOREST 7

STELLAR SUPPORT FROM DELICATE PRODUCTIONS, INC. 8

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: ALEX LAINE 8

UPCOMING: *SANTA BARBARA WILD!* 9

NEW LEGISLATION WOULD HARM LOS PADRES

A piece of bad legislation that would open the Los Padres National Forest up to rampant vegetation-clearing projects has been making its way through key committees in the House of Representatives. The bill, H.R. 2936, aims to allow certain activities like logging, oil drilling, mining, and more to move forward without being evaluated for potential effects to species protected under the Endangered Species Act. It would also remove public participation in many aspects of national forest management. Read more about this bill on Page 7.

CARRIZO PLAIN'S FATE KEPT SECRET

In April, President Trump issued an executive order instructing Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to review dozens of national monuments across the country, including the Carrizo Plain, to determine whether to reduce them in size or eliminate their protections. A report detailing the Interior Secretary's recommendations for each monument was sent to the president in August, but it remains unreleased to the public. Read more about this development and what we are doing on Page 2.

UPPER SESPE CLEANUP

A small but mighty group of volunteers braved the August heat wave to remove over 250 pounds of microtrash from the Upper Sespe watershed in the Los Padres National Forest. See Page 6 to read more about this and other recent volunteer projects.

10TH OJAI WILD! A MASSIVE SUCCESS!

On Sunday, June 4th, hundreds of conservationists filled the Upper Field at The Thacher School to celebrate the Sespe Wilderness and support Los Padres ForestWatch at the Tenth Annual *Ojai WILD!* The event shattered all of our expectations, turning out to be the biggest and most successful fundraiser in ForestWatch history! See Pages 3 and 4 to read about the event, where we awarded The Thacher School with this year's Wilderness Legacy Award.

SANTA PAULA CANYON DRILLING APPEAL

Since 2015, an oil company has been seeking to build 19 new oil wells in Santa Paula Canyon at the entryway to the Los Padres National Forest. The Ventura County Board of Supervisors approved the new wells without requiring any new environmental review, instead relying on a 37-year-old environmental impact report to claim that no new impacts were anticipated. We filed a lawsuit as well as an appeal against the Ventura County Planning Commission's issuance of a Zoning Clearance for the project. See page 7 to see an update on our case.

3RD ANNUAL SANTA BARBARA WILD! TICKETS ON SALE NOW

Join us on Sunday, October 22nd at The Garden Street Academy for our Third Annual *Santa Barbara WILD!* This fun event will feature a gourmet dinner, local craft brews and wines, live music, and exciting auctions. Tickets are going quickly, so be sure to buy yours today. For more information about the event to purchase tickets, visit sbwild.org. We hope to see you there!

FORESTWATCH & FIG MTN BREW CLEAN UP RED ROCK

A group of volunteers ventured into the Santa Barbara backcountry to clean up trash around the Red Rock Pools in September. We teamed up with Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co. to get their Mug Club members involved and maybe have a beer or two after the cleanup. Read more about the cleanup and see some photos on Page 6.

PROPOSAL TO CONVERT DAMAGED LA BREA ROADS TO TRAILS

The Forest Service is proposing to convert several miles of roads irreversibly damaged by the 2009 La Brea Fire and subsequent flooding to trails in the N. Fork La Brea Creek area. ForestWatch submitted comments supporting the conversion of eroding and damaged roads with dozens of creek crossings to trails in order to protect riparian habitat for sensitive species and water quality in this tributary to the Sisquoc River.

SLO COUNTY MAYORS SUPPORT THE CARRIZO

Five of the seven mayors in San Luis Obispo County wrote a letter to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke urging him to leave the Carrizo Plain National Monument unchanged. Thanks to these mayors for speaking out in support of the Carrizo Plain: Heidi Harmon of San Luis Obispo, John Shoals of Grover Beach, Steve Martin of Paso Robles, Jamie Irons of Morro Bay, and Tom O'Malley of Atascadero.

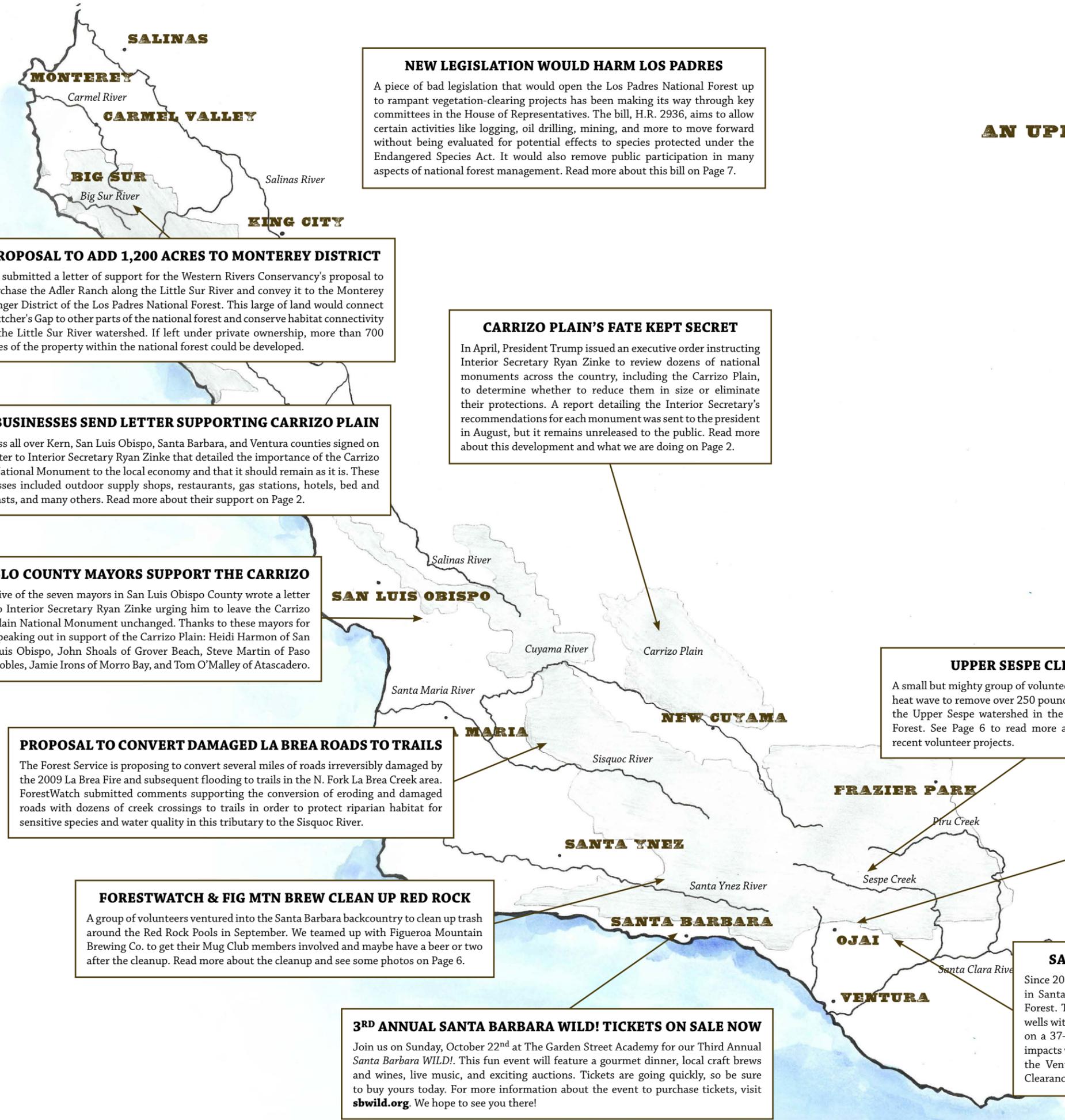
151 BUSINESSES SEND LETTER SUPPORTING CARRIZO PLAIN

Business all over Kern, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties signed on to a letter to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke that detailed the importance of the Carrizo Plain National Monument to the local economy and that it should remain as it is. These businesses included outdoor supply shops, restaurants, gas stations, hotels, bed and breakfasts, and many others. Read more about their support on Page 2.

PROPOSAL TO ADD 1,200 ACRES TO MONTEREY DISTRICT

We submitted a letter of support for the Western Rivers Conservancy's proposal to purchase the Adler Ranch along the Little Sur River and convey it to the Monterey Ranger District of the Los Padres National Forest. This large of land would connect Bottcher's Gap to other parts of the national forest and conserve habitat connectivity in the Little Sur River watershed. If left under private ownership, more than 700 acres of the property within the national forest could be developed.

FALL 2017



BASE CAMP



Jeff Kuyper
Executive Director

The Los Padres National Forest would look vastly different today, were it not for local residents like you and me taking a stand and demanding its protection.

Sespe Creek would be dammed by two large reservoirs that were proposed in the 1950s. Now, Sespe Creek is protected, thanks to the steadfast determination of local residents who worked to pass legislation to preserve its free-flowing character. Pine Mountain in Ojai's backcountry — the heart of the Los Padres National Forest — would be flanked by a huge phosphate mine proposed in the 1970s. But local residents attended hearings, wrote letters, called their representatives, defeated that mine, and forever preserved the mountainside from development. In Santa Barbara's backcountry, a road would extend from Manzanita Creek, over the famed Hurricane Deck, and up the Sisquoc River canyon. Thanks to the foresight of the forest advocates who came before us, the area was permanently protected as the San Rafael Wilderness Area in 1968.

Each time our forest was threatened, it was the people who cared for it — hikers, campers, equestrians, outdoor enthusiasts and even folks who had never set foot in the forest but appreciated its value from afar — who stepped up, demanded action, and made a difference. These are, after all, public lands. It is ultimately up to us — the public — to participate in how they are managed and protected for future generations. We need to be vigilant, keeping tabs on decisions being made and how best to influence them. If we let our guard down for even a moment, an entire landscape can be lost forever.

In today's rapidly changing political landscape, it helps to look back in history to put it all into perspective. So many times, the public has persevered over what appeared to be insurmountable odds. They wrote letters, attending hearings, drafted legislation, organized the community, and took agencies and corporations to court to defend our region's wild places. And they won. But only because they poured their hearts and souls into the effort, donated their time and money to the cause, and did everything they could to let their voices be heard.

Today we're continuing this good fight, for one simple reason — it's the right thing to do. Places like the Los Padres National Forest and the Carrizo Plain National Monument define who we are. These iconic landscapes are tied to the health of our communities, and indeed to the health of the planet. Never in the history of our public lands has so much been at stake. With you by our side, we will be able to stand strong for wildlife, open space, clean water, and outdoor recreation. Future generations will be glad that we did.

THE HERD KEEPS GROWING



REBECCA AUGUST

We are excited to welcome Rebecca August as our new Public Lands Advocate. Rebecca has spent her career engaging the public, but over the last decade, her work has focused primarily on activism and community organizing, building local support for environmental and social issues. With a BFA in Communication Design from Parsons School of Design, she has used digital platforms, art, and community organizing to co-found two complimentary local advocacy groups, to help launch a fracking ban, and to lead successful grassroots campaigns against oil development and air pollution in North Santa Barbara County. Rebecca loves to hike and backpack and paint the Los Padres National Forest, which serves as a backdrop to her home in the Santa Ynez Valley. As Public Lands Advocate, she engages communities and decision makers throughout the Los Padres region and beyond in the protection of these iconic landscapes, and public land throughout the region.



NATHAN WALLACE

We are also excited to welcome Nathan Wallace to our Board of Directors. An Ojai native, Nathan spent several years in San Diego working in quantitative finance. When they decided to start a family, Nathan and his wife Rebecca returned to Ojai to raise their children in a small town surrounded by their extended family. Nathan and his wife now have three children. Nathan owns and operates Greyfox Investors LLC, an independent wealth management firm located in Ojai. He specializes in working with individuals, endowments and non profits, helping them make prudent choices with their assets. Nathan grew up hiking, camping and climbing in the Los Padres National Forest and continues to regularly hike in the forest. He is excited to share the trails and backcountry with his children. "The Los Padres National Forest is an integral part of our community, scenically, biologically and for recreation," says Nate. "Protecting it enriches our community and keeps safe a much needed connection to the natural world."



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LEAKED REPORT: CARRIZO PLAIN SAFE?

National monument may be safe from reduction but not management plan weakening



There is truly no other place like the Carrizo.
Photo by Bob Wick

In late August, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke delivered his highly-anticipated recommendations to President Trump on the fate of more than two dozen national monuments that have been under review for possible reduction or elimination. The Carrizo Plain National Monument — located along California's central coast region — was one of the monuments considered most vulnerable during the review.

By September, the report was still unreleased to the public and the details were kept secret. However, we obtained what may be a leaked version of the report in mid-September. This leaked version has not been confirmed by the White House, but it does outline the recommendations made by Secretary Zinke. If the leaked report is authentic, it would mean the Carrizo Plain National Monument is safe from boundary reductions or outright elimination. However, it leaves open the possibility for the national monument's management plan to be weakened down the road.

Approximately 2.8 million public comments were received during the formal review period. More than 99% of those comments were in favor of keeping national monuments protected. 97% of comments pertaining to the Carrizo Plain were supportive of its monument status.

Background

Secretary Zinke's report was ordered by President Trump in April, and affected all national monuments designated since 1996 larger than 100,000 acres. The 206,000-acre Carrizo Plain National Monument — designated by President

Clinton in 2001 — was swept up in this review. This iconic landscape contains one of the last undeveloped grasslands in the Central Valley, contains a rich assemblage of prehistoric Native American rock art and cultural sites, and unique landmarks like Soda Lake, the San Andreas Fault, and Caliente Mountain, the highest point in San Luis Obispo County. It also provides habitat for unique and endangered plants and animals like tule elk, pronghorn antelope, California jewelflower, San Joaquin kit fox, and foraging habitat for California condors.

The national monument is also a main attraction during the spring, when fields, rolling hills, and mountains alike explode into color as wildflowers bloom. During these months — especially with this year's California Superbloom — hundreds of thousands of visitors make their way to the Carrizo Plain National Monument to witness the colorful display.

Next Steps

ForestWatch will continue to build support in the community for keeping the Carrizo Plain like it is, and will hold Secretary Zinke and the Trump Administration accountable to ensure that no changes are made to this iconic landscape.

We are still waiting for an official report to be released by the Department of the Interior, and we have submitted a Freedom of Information Act Request to force the release. For more information about the review of the Carrizo Plain and to see a full list of its supporters, visit savethecarrizo.org.



These pronghorn were also excited about the wildflowers.
Photo by Patti Gutshall



Photo by Luke Williams

CARRIZO SUPPORT

Clear and Overwhelming.

Ever since we heard that the Trump Administration would be reviewing dozens of national monuments, around the country including the Carrizo Plain, we have been working non-stop to get as many citizens, elected officials, businesses, and organizations to show their public support for the Carrizo. We launched **Save the Carrizo Plain!** in April and have since attended and organized countless Central Coast events to provide support postcards for people to sign, met with elected officials, and organized rallies and support parties. Below is the list of support our local national monument received and the results of our efforts over the summer:

- **Nearly 4,000 Central Coast residents submitted a letter** specifically citing the Carrizo Plain and urging Secretary Zinke to keep the area protected
- **146 businesses wrote a letter** to Interior Secretary Zinke, highlighting the economic benefits of the Carrizo Plain's monument status and urging him not to shrink its boundaries and to keep its protections in place
- **More than 40 local elected officials**, including 5 of the 7 mayors in San Luis Obispo County, wrote a letter to Interior Secretary Zinke, expressing their support for the Carrizo Plain
- **Over 50 community organizations** including museums, botanic gardens, zoos, conservation organizations, historic societies, and others joined together to pledge their support for the Carrizo Plain
- **10 current and former members of the Carrizo Plain's Monument Advisory Committee**, which is made up of tribal leaders, elected officials, ranchers, and scientists and has guided management of the monument since it was designated

BEST EVER.

Biggest, wildest *Ojai WILD!* in ForestWatch history!



A beautiful day at The Thacher School made for a lot of smiling faces!
Photo by David N. Lee

Sunday, June 4th, 2017 on The Thacher School's Upper Field was truly epic! With the support of our sponsors, guests, members, volunteers, and community, we welcomed over 300 people to our tenth annual, record-breaking *Ojai WILD!* fundraiser, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Sespe Wilderness and honoring The Thacher School with the 2017 Wilderness Legacy Award.

In honor of the 25th Anniversary of the Sespe Wilderness, we had very ambitious goals: to engage more members of our community, to raise more funding to protect our public lands, and to have fun doing it! The event raised over \$140,000, which is two-thirds more than last year!

WILDERNESS LEGACY AWARD

The Thacher School

This year, we were excited to present The Thacher School with the Wilderness Legacy Award. Their dedication to remain firmly grounded in an outdoor ethic, a responsibility to environmental sustainability, and a deep connection to nature resonates deeply with us. Every fall and spring — and many weekend trips between — students and faculty take to the trails for backpacking trips, leaving out their back door to explore the Los Padres National Forest and other wild and protected places across our beautiful state of California. And on many weekends, you are likely to find small groups of students and faculty members maintaining and improving trails such as Horn Canyon Trail, a gateway from the Ojai Valley into the Los Padres National Forest. Within our community, The Thacher School serves as a beacon of balanced living, an example of how to live, play, and work sustainably, and we are excited to give them this year's Wilderness Legacy Award.

10TH ANNUAL

OJAI WILD!

A BENEFIT FOR LOS PADRES FORESTWATCH
CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF THE SESPE

Special recognition is due to the generous participation of our sponsors who made this unique event possible. Seasons Catering graciously served a sumptuous buffet and delectable appetizers, and Ventura Rental Party Center provided the elegant tenting to accommodate our auctions and dining. Our event production needs were generously supported by Delicate Productions, Inc. and DSR, LLC. We are grateful to The Dan Grimm Band for providing the perfect soundtrack for the day, capturing a very special *Ojai* atmosphere. This year we were excited to have another Condor Cake created by Kirsten Soria, made even more delicious with the accompaniments of Ventura's McConnell's Fine Ice Cream (personally scooped by Jimmy Young) and Beacon Coffee Company.

We are grateful to Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co. for providing their refreshing brews, and to Casa Barranca, Ojai Vineyard, Topa Mountain Winery, Palmina Wines, and Solminer Wines for their delicious wines. We appreciated locally crafted treats such as Lori's

Original Lemonade, Sun Oven pastries for powering our volunteers, and Thacher Road Cookies and Le Bon Garçon Caramels to add sweetness to the pink moment. We are truly grateful to Carol Gravelle's stellar graphic designs and Karen Sketch's beautiful program, and contributing photographers Zack Abbey, Dan McCaslin, James Wapotich and Ron Williams. Event photography coverage was generously provided by Luke Butcher, Luke Williams, Pete Davis, and David N. Lee.

We are especially grateful to our contributors to our silent auction, which featured unique items from local vendors and businesses, along with several highlights such as a commissioned piece of handcrafted furniture made by S. Thomas Woodworks, Patagonia



Dan Grimm performed awesome live music in the silent auction tent.
Photo by Luke Williams



We always have some big winners at *Ojai WILD!*
Photo by David N. Lee

gear, a fat bike from The MOB Shop, and artwork by California Landscape Painter of the Sespe River Robert Wassell, among others.

Our live auction proved to be a grand

success, with Craig and Mary's Excellent Backpacking Adventure bringing down the house, and the Casa Puesta del Sol in Punta Mita, Mexico, a double winner! Fund-a-Need raised over \$60,000, our greatest success ever to protect the Carrizo Plain National Monument and other public lands!

Our deep appreciation goes to our tireless event committee who contributed months of their time and talents to bringing our silent and live auction to life, and for making this event run smoothly and successfully: Rachel Barkley, Michelle Ellison, Terri and Alex Laine, and Ian Nicholson.

And we are truly grateful to our event volunteers who ignite the event with their

enthusiasm, energy, hard work and willing contribution of their precious time. *Ojai WILD!* would not be possible without these wonderful people, and we send a big shout-out to those who joined us on June 4th as well as those that helped us prepare in our offices.

As we continue this good work and continue to build momentum, your support, dedication and encouragement make it all possible. Thank you to all who joined us at *Ojai WILD!*, and we look forward to seeing you again next year.

See below for a full list of this year's incredible sponsors. The 10th Annual *Ojai WILD!* would not have been possible without the support from these individuals and businesses.

THANK YOU!

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Other Event Supporters

Lori's Original Lemonade

Ojai Coffee Roasting Co.

SunOven Gluten Free



Photo by Chuck Graham

CARRIZO FEATURED IN SUMMER EVENTS

Summer fun featuring the Carrizo Plain, despite the circumstances

We bet you have already noticed this, but we love the Carrizo Plain National Monument. Not only is it home to the greatest concentration of endangered and threatened species in California, but it is actually connected to the Los Padres National Forest via the Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge and the Carrizo Plains Ecological Reserve. The national monument has always had a special place in our hearts — which is why we have been working so hard to ensure that it stays protected.

This summer, we organized some fun events to get citizens up and down the Central Coast engaged in protecting the Carrizo Plain.

Bears Ears to Carrizo Plain: Protecting America's National Monuments

Our longtime partner, Patagonia, also took a strong stand against any attacks on our national monuments. They organized a nationwide effort to protect these places, and we were excited to team up here at home to bring people together in support of the Carrizo Plain. A massive crowd packed into the Patagonia's Great Pacific Iron Works store to see Rick Ridgeway talk about their efforts to protect national monuments, our very own Jeff Kuyper talk about the review and how it was affecting the Carrizo Plain, and local photographer Dan Holmes present a slideshow of his favorite photos of national monuments across the West.

Rally for the Carrizo

A week before the public comment period for the review ended, we organized a rally at San Luis Obispo's Mission Plaza. The rally's



A full house for our support party at Patagonia Ventura!
Photo by Luke Williams

guest speakers featured Rep. Salud Carbajal, former Congresswoman Lois Capps, Northern Chumash Tribal Council Vice-chairwoman Violet Cavanaugh, San Luis Obispo Mayor Heidi Harmon, and Carrizo Plain resident Pat Veasart. These amazing speakers addressed a crowd of hundreds about why the Carrizo Plain deserves to be protected.

Carrizo on Tap!

In July, we teamed up with Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co., who let us present a slideshow of photos and information about the Carrizo Plain to patrons for an evening at their Arroyo Grande taproom. We connected with locals who came out for a beer and some food while supporting the Carrizo Plain.



Carrizo on Tap attendees enjoyed a relaxing evening picnic and beer.
Photo by Rebecca August

We had so much fun mixing Fig Mtn beer with the Carrizo Plain that we decided to do it again in August, this time setting up outside in the Toad&Co courtyard atop the Santa Barbara Riviera. ForestWatch members and new supporters alike came out to enjoy a slideshow presentation by local photographer, Chuck Graham, who showed some of his amazing photos from the Carrizo Plain. Guests were also treated to a talk by Toad&Co CEO and President of the Outdoor Industry Association Gordon Seabury, who talked about their efforts to protect national monuments across the country by uniting the outdoor industry.

Thanks to everyone who attended these events and to all of those who made them possible. The public still does not know what will happen to the Carrizo Plain, but they sure made their voices heard!

STELLAR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers clean up trash throughout the Los Padres National Forest!



A small but mighty group of volunteers cleaned the Upper Sespe!
Photo by Luke Williams

After a summer working on ensuring the Carrizo Plain National Monument stays protected, it was great to get back out into the Los Padres National Forest with volunteers to clean up trash and protect watersheds and wildlife! Read on to find out how people have been making a difference by getting their hands dirty and their boots dusty in the forest.

Upper Sespe Cleanup

On Saturday, August 26th a small team of ForestWatch volunteers braved the blistering heat and ventured into the Upper Sespe watershed to clean up microtrash at an illegal target shooting site. Thanks to their efforts, over 250 pounds of microtrash no longer threatens the safety of wildlife and water quality in the area.

After meeting up in Ojai and carpooling to the site, our volunteers took a short hike to the site where they saw bullet casings, shells, broken glass, pieces of targets, bowling pins, and bullet-riddled electronics strewn across the bed of a stream that flows into Sespe Creek. The shooting site is not designated and it poses a fire risk in the Los Padres National Forest backcountry.

The colorful microtrash created by blasted targets also poses a significant health hazard for endangered California condors that have been known to fly over the area when traveling between condor sanctuaries in the Los Padres National Forest. For still unknown reasons, California condors have been observed feeding microtrash to their chicks, which can cause them to become malnourished with survival only possible by human intervention with



A beautiful Los Padres National Forest backdrop for volunteer work.
Photo by Bryant Baker

surgical efforts. There are over 100 similar illegal target shooting sites throughout the national forest that pose the same danger to this critically endangered species.

Thank you to these fantastic volunteers and to Alex Laine for donating his utility trailer to haul trash (check out more about all the ways Alex helps ForestWatch on Page 8). We will continue to monitor this site and work to ensure that illegal target shooting is stopped there and elsewhere around the forest.

Red Rock Cleanup with Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co.

On September 9th, a group of 16 volunteers hiked out to the Red Rock Pools to clean up trash left behind by visitors over the Labor Day weekend. The group included ForestWatch volunteers, Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co. employees, and members of the Fig Mtn Brew Mug Club. After a couple of hours of work, these awesome volunteers hauled out over 100 pounds of trash scattered around the pools!

The morning started off clear and cool, but quickly heated up in the canyon. Our group carpoled out to the Red Rock Trailhead where we geared up with water and supplies. A resourceful volunteer brought a stack of used grain bags repurposed for trash collection, which proved to be tear-proof in some of the thornier areas we cleaned.



After a short half-mile hike to the pools, the group fanned out to find trash lodged between rocks, floating in the water, and caught in bushes around the pools. One volunteer even left the dry heat to brave the nice, cool water to get some trash out of a hard-to-reach crevice. The scattered trash was mostly beverage containers and plastic wrappers, although diapers, floaties, and a bicycle helmet were also found.

Once our hardworking group was sure the area was spotless, we lugged our many bags of trash back to the trailhead. After the cleanup, we were treated to beer from Figueroa Mountain Brewing and our volunteers received a coupon for a free beer



Fantastic work cleaning up the Red Rock Pools by this awesome group!
Photo by Bryant Baker

at one of their taprooms!

Thanks to all of these great volunteers for coming out and helping keep this special part of the Los Padres National Forest clean and to Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co. for helping make this happen!

Upcoming Projects

We have more cleanups and other volunteer opportunities coming up this fall and winter, such as the Cherry Creek Cleanup on Saturday, October 14th. We have been working to clean up this site since it was closed to target shooting in 2017. Other opportunities such as marijuana grow site cleanups may come up quickly with short notice, so be sure to sign up for email updates at our website and follow us on Facebook.

To see a full list of upcoming projects for the fall and to learn more about volunteering with ForestWatch, visit our website at:

LPFW.org/volunteer

WILD THINGS

San Joaquin Kit Fox

Weighing in at only five pounds, the San Joaquin kit fox is the smallest fox species on North America's mainland. While small, these foxes have much larger ears compared to other species, making them well-adapted to living in hot, dry areas. Their large ears may help dissipate body heat and also help them focus on tiny noises in the night, such as insects or mice. San Joaquin kit foxes can survive without freshwater, obtaining enough fluids from their prey alone.

Prior to 1930, kit foxes inhabited the entire San Joaquin Valley in central California, as well as the lower elevations of the eastern Coast Ranges. Today, kit fox populations have declined by as much as 33%, and they are now limited to the west side of the San Joaquin valley and in the Los Padres National Forest. Kit foxes are found in the Carrizo Plain National Monument as well as the Los Padres National Forest in the upper Cuyama Valley and on the eastern slopes of the La Panza Range in San Luis Obispo County. The Carrizo Plain is the largest of the three remaining core populations, making this area vital to the recovery of the species.

In 1967 the San Joaquin kit fox was listed as a federally endangered species, and in 1971 the State of California listed it as a threatened species because of a dramatic decline in habitat. Much of the habitat for the kit fox has been developed for agricultural and industrial development. Development leads to fragmentation and isolation, making it difficult to find shelter, mates and food.

ForestWatch has worked to protect this species by demanding strict wildlife protection standards in the management plans for the Carrizo Plain National Monument and the Los Padres National Forest to ensure that remaining kit fox habitat remains unfragmented and intact. We are also currently working to ensure that the Carrizo Plain is not altered as a result of the Trump Administration's recent review of national monuments.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE FOREST



Santa Paula Canyon still faces threats from new drilling. Photo by Tim Hauf

SAVE SANTA PAULA CANYON UPDATE

In 2015, a plan to drill 19 new oil wells in Santa Paula Canyon adjacent to the Los Padres National Forest was approved by the County of Ventura Board of Supervisors despite public outcry over the proposal.

More than one thousand concerned residents and experts wrote letters opposing the project. When County Planning staff approved the project with few changes, the groups filed an appeal to the County Planning Commission. Then the Commission approved the project and the groups appealed to the County Board of Supervisors. In October 2015, the Supervisors — in a split 3-2 vote — allowed the drilling project to move forward.

Less than a month later, ForestWatch, Citizens for Responsible Oil & Gas, and the Center of Biological Diversity filed a lawsuit in Ventura County Superior Court naming the County, California Resources Corporation, and Texas-based Seneca Resources Corporation alleging that the County's approval violates the

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The case has moved slowly, with groups filing opening arguments in February of this year. And on Monday, December 4, we will make oral arguments in front of a judge. A ruling is expected sometime in December or early January, although a tentative ruling may be issued a few days before the court date. We are being represented by Chatten-Brown & Carstens of Los Angeles.

Additionally, ForestWatch appealed a Zoning Clearance issued for the project by the Ventura County Planning Commission in October 2016 — one year after approving the new drilling. This clearance would have allowed the companies to move forward with starting the new drilling, but our appeal placed the project on hold. On September 7, we spoke at a Planning Commission hearing for our appeal. We have been documenting the oil company's noncompliance with their current permit and we raised this issue with the Commission as they considered our appeal. Unfortunately, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve their original Zoning Clearance, indicating that they are fine with the company not fully complying with their permit in this unique and sensitive canyon. We have appealed this decision to the Board of Supervisors. Stay tuned for updates about our appeal and the lawsuit on our website and in the next issue of this newsletter.

LEGISLATION WOULD HARM LOS PADRES NATIONAL FOREST

Earlier this year, an ugly piece of legislation was introduced into the House of Representatives that would eliminate several environmental protections that are currently in place on national forest lands.

The bill, H.R. 2936, was introduced by Rep. Bruce Westerman (R-AR). Among other harmful provisions, the bill would eliminate the Endangered Species Act's requirements that the Forest Service ensure projects like logging, oil drilling, mining, and road construction do not harm endangered wildlife and plants. It would allow rushed logging and vegetation clearing projects up to 30,000 acres (46 square miles) without meaningful public involvement or scientific evaluation of harms, as well as a rushed normal review process for evaluating impacts to Native American sacred sites. It would also reduce the public's ability to participate in how public lands are managed, and would tie the hands of judges when reviewing forest projects in federal court. Finally, it would render the forest plan — a blueprint for each national forest — meaningless, gutting requirements to evaluate the impacts of forest-wide actions and incorporate public participation into the planning process.

The House Committee on Natural Resources, a key hurdle for the bill, approved the measure on June 29, 2017 along party lines, with 23 Republicans voting to advance the bill and 12 Democrats opposed. The bill now moves to three other House committees for review before a possible vote on the House floor later this year.

ForestWatch joined with nearly two dozen other conservation groups from around the country, lodging a letter with the House Committee in opposition to the bill. In urging legislators to strongly oppose the bill, the letter states, "As currently written, the bill severely undermines the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), eliminates citizen opportunities to seek judicial relief, allows millions of acres of currently protected roadless areas vulnerable to harmful road building and logging, reallocates funds under the Secure Rural Schools Act away from environmental restoration to timber production, dismantles interagency consultation integral to the Endangered Species Act, and puts national monuments designated under the Antiquities Act at risk." Among its problematic provisions, the bill creates multiple sweeping NEPA waivers, imposes 2-month deadlines on certain environmental assessments, and undermines citizens' ability to enforce the law.

ForestWatch and our partners will continue to track this legislation as it moves through the legislative process.



The new bill would allow massive vegetation clearing projects to be conducted without any public input or environmental review.

STELLAR SUPPORT DELICATE PRODUCTIONS, INC

Each year, ForestWatch hosts several events to engage members, raise funds that support our efforts to protect the Los Padres National Forest and other public lands, or to just bring like-minded people together for fun and education. Many of these events involve visual presentations, live music, and public speakers, so they require audio and visual equipment — equipment that we simply do not have ourselves. Luckily, our good friends at Delicate Productions, Inc. have been there to support us by providing equipment and expertise to make each of these events run smoothly and successfully. We talked with Smoother Smyth, Delicate Productions' founder and CFO about the company and why he supports ForestWatch.



Delicate Productions recently made our Carrizo on Tap! event possible by providing audio and visuals for our outdoor event. Photo by Rebecca August

TELL US HOW DELICATE PRODUCTIONS, INC. CAME TO BE.

I was working as an audio technician with Supertramp on their extremely successful 1979 "Breakfast in America" World Tour when I caught rumors of an upcoming extended break. At that time the band owned a complete arena sized touring sound system and 50% of an extensive lighting rig..it seemed a sin to me to have such a valuable inventory of production equipment sitting idle for such a long time.

I suggested to the band that the crew form a production company providing services to the touring industry. This would negate the need for the band to pay any crew retainers. They consented and also gave me \$40k to get things rolling (that doesn't happen every day). Delicate Productions opened shop in January 1980. I rented a space in the old Wonder Loaf factory smack in the center of Beverly Hills (333 Foothill Drive). Our first tour was with the Clash and I will never forget singer Joe Strummer's remark to me after the last show. "Not bad for a bunch of Hippies."

WHY DO YOU SUPPORT FORESTWATCH?

Fellow industry veteran, and supporter of your organization, Ed Kish suggested you guys call me for the Second Annual Ojai WILD!. I was intrigued and decided to actually offer my personal services rather than just send others to do the job. I was able to see firsthand how hard you all work and the total commitment you give to such a worthy cause. I am also motivated by the generosity of Patagonia. I know of no other organization that gives from the heart more so than the Iron Works. ForestWatch is the sum of the parts...both big parts and little parts. It all counts.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING TO DO IN THE LOS PADRES NATIONAL FOREST AND IN THE OUTDOORS IN GENERAL?

That's easy: fly fishing. Put a rod in my hand I can hike forever. My partner Colleen and I spend a great deal of time in the mountains. We are members of the Sierra Pacific Fly Fishers which has given us great access to like-minded people and a monthly dinner meeting where we get to see and hear a presentation from the best our sport has to offer. So little time and so much to do...

Thank you, Delicate Productions, Inc., for your continued support of our work protecting the Los Padres National Forest, the Carrizo Plain National Monument, and other public lands throughout our region! Be sure to look for Smoother at future ForestWatch events. You just might get to hear a stellar story from his touring days!

Thank you!



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Alex Laine

Saying that Alex Laine is just a ForestWatch volunteer would be like saying the Sespe is just a creek. He has been an integral part of our small but mighty organization for over a decade, filling the role of field volunteer, event organizer, sign-maker, and more.

Each year, Alex helps ensure that Ojai WILD! is as big and fantastic as possible. Just this year, he constructed 10 sandwich board signs to use at the event. And when we say constructed, we mean he bought the wood, cut it to size, attached the chalkboard, and screwed it all together...for every single sign! And this year, he is working on creating 80 new signs (yes, you read that right) that will be used for everything from holding silent auction item information to drink menus that we can use at our WILD! events.

Not only is Alex hard at work crafting unique signs for us, but he serves on the Ojai WILD! Committee and as a volunteer team leader each year. You may see him working at the next event, making sure things go smoothly.

Aside from working behind the scenes at our events, Alex also helps out the Los Padres National Forest by joining volunteer field projects. Just to name a few, he has helped clean up illegal target shooting microtrash in the Ventura backcountry, remove trash on Cuyama Peak in the Santa Barbara backcountry, and clean up microtrash around a crumbling watchtower on Thorn Point in the Sespe Wilderness. And most recently he has gone out of his way to let ForestWatch use his utility trailer to haul trash out of the Upper Sespe watershed.

We are extremely lucky to have Alex help out at events and volunteer projects, and his craftsmanship constantly puts our WILD! events over the top. Thank you so much for all that you do, Alex! We are a better organization because of your time and hard work year in and year out.



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GET YOUR TICKETS TODAY!

THIRD ANNUAL

Santa Barbara WILD!

A BENEFIT FOR
LOS PADRES FORESTWATCH

Sunday, October 22
3:00 – 6:30 PM

The Garden Street Academy's Playing Fields

Tickets available at:

sbwild.org

Featuring:

Delicious Appetizers and Gourmet Dinner

Fresh ricotta, toasted hazelnuts, and sage-honey crostini
Herb and scallion roasted wild Alaskan Salmon from
Kanaloa Seafood
& more

Local Craft Brews

from Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co.

Local Hand-crafted Wines

Red wine by Solminer Wine Co.
White wine by Beckmen Vineyards

Exciting Live & Silent Auctions

Foodie Trip for Two to Tuscany
Weeklong Stay in Park City, Utah
Patagonia Backstage Tour

Live Music

The Bryan Titus Trio

