

# LOS PADRES FORESTWATCH

**PROTECTING WILDLIFE AND WILD PLACES ALONG CALIFORNIA'S CENTRAL COAST**

FALL 2018



In Memory of Condor #526  
*Chris Trent*





# LOOKING ACROSS THE FOREST

AN UPDATE ON HOW WE'RE PROTECTING YOUR REGION

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### 1.6 MILLION ACRES OF CENTRAL CALIFORNIA PUBLIC LAND AND MINERAL ESTATE TO BE OPENED UP TO DRILLING AND FRACKING

The Bureau of Land Management has re-initiated the process to open up 1.6 million acres of public land and mineral estate across six counties in central California to new oil drilling and fracking. Hundreds of thousands of acres along the Central Coast, including lands adjacent to the Los Padres National Forest and Carrizo Plain National Monument as well as near schools and reservoirs, could be opened to fracking as part of this proposal. Read more on Page 2.

### NEW OIL WELL PROPOSED IN THE CARRIZO PLAIN NATIONAL MONUMENT

For the first time since it was designated a national monument in 2001, the Bureau of Land Management has approved a new oil well and pipeline on the Carrizo Plain. The approval was in violation of several laws, so ForestWatch and the Center for Biological Diversity filed an appeal challenging the project. Over the summer, ForestWatch staff argued our case in front of the Bureau of Land Management state director in Sacramento. We are still waiting for the final decision on this precedent-setting proposal. You can read more about this and other issues affecting local public lands on Page 4.

### VOLUNTEERS CLEAN UP WEST CUESTA RIDGE

ForestWatch volunteers have gone out to West Cuesta Ridge near San Luis Obispo twice this year to remove over 600 pounds of trash. In the spring, a group of forest stewards removed trash and some abandoned furniture from the area. This fall, we cleaned up West Cuesta Ridge as part of county-wide Coastal Cleanup Day efforts. Read more about recent volunteer projects on Page 6.

### FOREST SERVICE CONSIDERS RESTORING SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC ACCESS TO LA BREA CANYON

In 2017, the Forest Service announced plans to reopen La Brea Canyon near the San Rafael Wilderness. Roads in the area were damaged beyond repair after the 2009 La Brea Fire and subsequent flooding. This summer, the agency released a draft of their Environmental Assessment for the project, which recommended converting the heavily-damaged roads to non-motorized trails. We support this proposal to restore sustainable public access over the alternatives which would attempt to repair the roads or build an entirely new off-road vehicle trail along an undisturbed ridge.

### ENDANGERED CALIFORNIA CONDOR FOUND SHOT AND KILLED

The Fish and Wildlife Service announced that a 9-year-old California condor had been found shot and killed just outside of the Los Padres National Forest near Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge. There is an ongoing investigation with a \$15,000 reward for any information that leads to an arrest. The shooting of Condor #526 is a terrible tragedy and a reminder that these endangered birds are still at serious risk. Read more on Page 4.

### VOLUNTEERS CLEAN UP SESPE CREEK & PIEDRA BLANCA

In September, a group of volunteers ventured out along Wild & Scenic Sespe Creek to clean up trash left behind at popular swimming holes before heading out into the Sespe Wilderness to remove trash around Piedra Blanca. Altogether they removed 40 pounds of trash from the area. We're glad to see that this number is down 20 pounds from our cleanup at the same site one year ago. Read more about recent volunteer projects on Page 6.

### SANTA PAULA CANYON TRASH REMOVED

Volunteers hiked nearly 10 miles to remove over 150 pounds of trash from Santa Paula Canyon in October. They made it to Big Cone Camp, where several pounds of broken glass and cans were removed, and to the first swimming hole, where they cleaned up towels, food containers, old shirts, bottles, and cans. Luckily, it was a gorgeous day and the waterfalls were flowing! Read more about recent volunteer projects on Page 6.

### UPCOMING: 4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SANTA BARBARA WILD!

This year's *Santa Barbara WILD!* will be celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the San Rafael Wilderness. Join us on October 21 from 3 - 6:30 PM at Garden Street Academy in Santa Barbara to help us raise funds to support our efforts to protect the Los Padres National Forest, Carrizo Plain National Monument, and other public lands from new fracking and logging proposals. See Page 9 for more details about the event.

### FACILITATING OUTDOOR CONNECTIONS

Over the summer we began hosting bilingual hikes for our Latino community, reaching out to underrepresented groups, working with youth, and fostering outdoor connections that promote an appreciation for wildlife, wilderness, and stewardship. Research shows the Latino population is one of the fastest growing demographics. They are also among the most underrepresented groups in conservation, outdoor recreation, and environmental organizations. You can read more about our efforts to expand access and support outdoor exploration on Page 6.

### 11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL OJAI WILD! ANOTHER SUCCESS!

This year's *Ojai WILD!* was spectacular as usual. Over 250 conservationists enjoyed a beautiful afternoon at The Thacher School in Ojai as we raised funds to help protect our local public lands. Read more about this great event on Page 5.

FALL 2018





# BASE CAMP



**Jeff Kuyper**  
Executive Director

We're halfway through a new administration and the attacks on our public lands show no signs of letting up. Over the past two years, we've fought oil drilling and fracking expansion, a sham review of the Carrizo Plain National Monument, commercial logging in the Los Padres National Forest, and other efforts to undermine the lands that define our region. Now more than ever, it's important that we hold true to our mission and values as well as the science we use to inform our positions.

Sometimes, those positions are difficult—and the decisions we make are not ones we take lightly. For example, over the last year, we have participated heavily in a regional conversation about how to best protect our communities from wildfire. The science about wildfire is still evolving, and it will continue to evolve. However, there are clear findings and recommendations from fire scientists about the most effective ways we can keep life and property safe,

such as ensuring that structures are built or retrofitted with fire-safe materials, smart vegetation removal is conducted immediately around homes and communities, and risky development in fire-prone areas is curbed. Because these can be difficult measures to take, there is occasional pushback and renewed calls for more large-scale vegetation removal as wildfire mitigation instead. We will continue to advocate for science-based solutions that balance ecological conservation and community protection, regardless of political pressures and commercial interests.

As the climate continues to change, the political winds continue to shift, and the attacks on public lands continue to come, we must band together and let our collective voice be heard. The times ahead are likely going to be as difficult or worse, but ultimately, we will make a difference. Thank you for supporting our efforts—we couldn't do it without you.

## COMINGS AND GOINGS



GRACIELA CABELLO

We're excited to welcome Graciela Cabello as our new Director of Youth & Community Engagement! She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from California State University, East Bay. Prior to joining ForestWatch, she was the founding National Director of Latino Outdoors, a national organization committed to supporting Latino engagement, leadership, and advocacy in the areas of outdoor recreation and conservation. Her background also includes an eight-year stint in digital media, where she was part of a team at Comcast optimizing the needs of television and film advertisers. Her passion lies in protecting our public lands and building a diverse conservation movement with greater access to wild places for all.



ETHAN STONE

We welcome entrepreneur, business consultant, and outdoor enthusiast Ethan Stone to our Board of Directors. His love of nature began when he was a kid while roaming the forests and salt marshes of Massachusetts. After graduating from Tufts University with a BA in Political Science, Ethan moved to Santa Barbara where he was struck by the area's beauty and began to explore the Los Padres. He later earned an MBA from UCLA and went on to develop a successful financial services company before returning to Santa Barbara with his wife and two children. For the past twenty years Ethan has been involved in volunteer activities including as a Hope School District Board of Trustees member, Childrens' Project Board member, County Animal Shelter volunteer, and youth mentor in the Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse anti-gang program.



CHRIS COGAN

We bid a fond farewell to Dr. Chris Cogan as he departs the Board after six years of service to Los Padres ForestWatch. During his tenure, Chris brought his diverse scientific background to the table and contributed his deep knowledge of the California condor recovery program. He also greatly enhanced our GIS mapping program and fine-tuned our internal policies and procedures. Chris will be missed and we wish him all the best as he pursues a new teaching position in Canada.



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# FRACKING PUBLIC LANDS ALONG THE CENTRAL COAST?

Plan to potentially open up 1.6 million acres of public land and mineral estate to drilling and fracking

The Trump Administration is seeking to open nearly 273,000 acres of federal land and mineral estate across San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties to fracking and oil drilling. The areas slated for drilling are part of a regional study—launched in early August—evaluating the environmental and public health impacts of fracking across 1.6 million acres in six counties in central California.

The BLM published a blurry map showing which parcels could be opened to drilling and fracking. The poor quality of the map prompted ForestWatch and its partner the Center for Biological Diversity to request access to the GIS parcel data that BLM used to produce the map. The BLM provided the data nearly two weeks after receiving the requests and halfway into the public comment period.

ForestWatch converted the BLM's GIS data into an easy-to-use online interactive map. This map allowed the public to quickly understand exactly which lands were considered open for drilling and fracking. It also revealed several lands slated for drilling and fracking that were not visible on the BLM's original map. This was yet another example of how groups like ForestWatch can provide critical information to the public and inspire them to act.

### Split Estate Parcels and Leasing

Many of the lands slated to be open to drilling and fracking are known as "split estate" parcels because the surface owner is different than the holder of the underlying mineral rights. The BLM did not directly notify the surface owners of the public comment period, and many were unaware of it until ForestWatch requested the data from BLM, analyzed it using mapping software, and notified the property owners.

Under federal law, once its study is complete, the BLM can auction off the drilling rights to these parcels for as little as \$2.00 per acre, possibly giving oil companies the right to construct roads, oil wells, pipelines, and other infrastructure on these privately-owned parcels.

### Impacts To Schools, Parks, and Preserves

The BLM's data indicated that thousands of acres of land and mineral estate marked as "open" to oil leasing are on or near schools, state parks, nature preserves, and other public and private lands. In Ojai, the plan could potentially open an area on The Thacher

School's property and the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy's Ilvento Preserve to fracking. Thousands of acres immediately adjacent to Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge are also marked as open to leasing.

In Santa Barbara County, thousands of acres of land along the base of the Sierra Madre Mountains at the edge of the Los Padres National Forest were designated as open for leasing. A parcel in Carpinteria marked as open for leasing is within 2,000 feet of the Cate School.

Land directly across the street from Los Oso Middle School in San Luis Obispo County could also be opened to drilling and fracking under the proposal. The

BLM even marked Morro Rock and mineral estate below Montana de Oro State Park as open. Other lands that could be opened in the county are adjacent and below wilderness areas proposed through the current Central Coast Heritage Protection Act introduced by Rep. Carbajal and Sen. Harris.

### Overwhelming Opposition

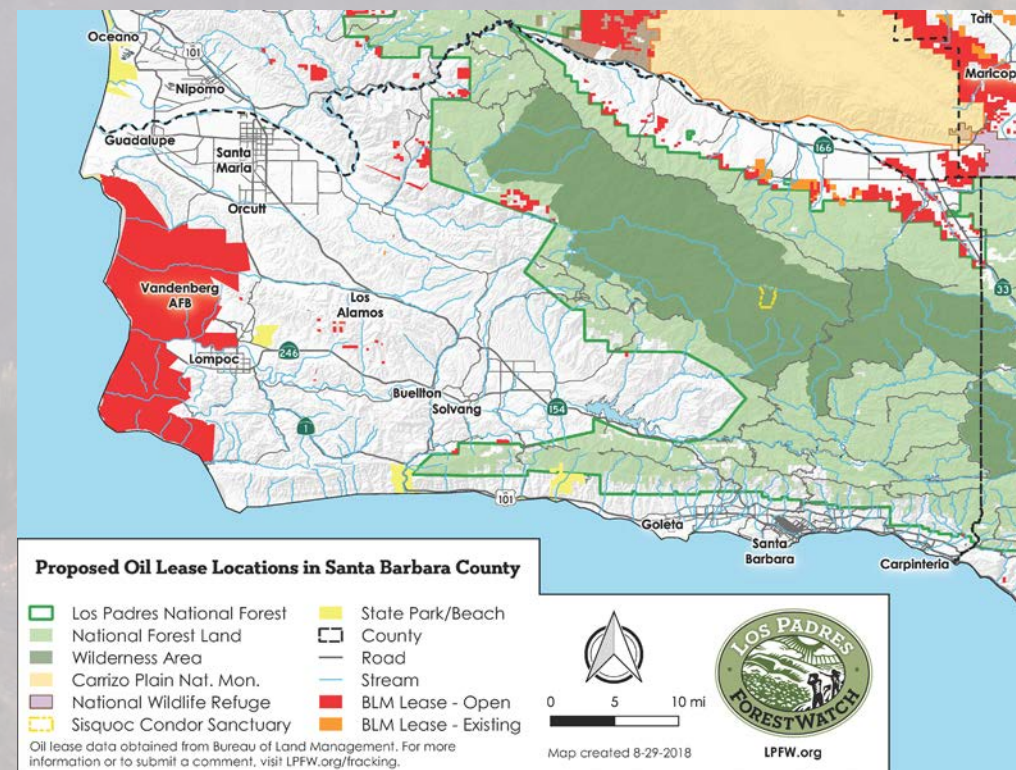
One of the first steps we took when the BLM issued its notice was to create an online portal for the public to use to easily submit comments. Normally, large proposals have a similar comment portal set up through a government website, but not this one.

Over 3,000 comments were submitted through our online portal—all of them in opposition to drilling and fracking near schools, along trails, and across other public lands. As the proposal gained significant media attention, the BLM likely received many more comments as well.

### Next Steps

The BLM will now draft the results of the fracking impacts study. We believe this draft will be released sometime in early 2019. At that point, there will be another public comment period—the last opportunity for the public to speak out about the proposal. We will continue to do everything we can to stop new oil drilling and fracking on public lands in our region.

Stay tuned for more updates on this issue at [LPFW.org](http://LPFW.org).





# RECENT LEGISLATION: THE GOOD, THE BAD, & THE UGLY

A review of recent bills from Congress and the California legislature

One thing that can be attributed to the current congress and administration is a keen efficiency for undoing, especially when it comes to environmental protections. This has emboldened extractive industries to reach for previously untenable resources, including in our most cherished wild places. Even in California, misguided and misinformed attempts to address wildfire could have lasting negative consequences on our unique ecosystems.

ForestWatch has worked to focus federal and state legislation and policy on public and firefighter safety and away from efforts that have not been shown to stop wildfires like logging and remote fuel breaks. These issues and others have given ForestWatch a great deal to “watch.” Results have been mixed.

## SB 465, SB 821, and SB 1877: Home Fire-hardening and Emergency Notifications

ForestWatch and its allies lobbied Senator Jackson and Assemblymember Limon to focus their authored fire legislation on science-driven solutions that protect communities. These bills do just that. Jackson's SB 465 helps property owners finance wildfire safety improvements and her bill, SB 821, allows counties to automatically enroll residents in targeted emergency notifications. Limon's AB 1877 ensures that alerts are broadcasted in a region's most commonly spoken language after English.

## SB 1260: Prescribed Burns

SB 1260 makes it easier for Cal Fire to conduct prescribed burns. Chaparral and coastal sage

scrub ecosystems already burn so frequently that their ability to regenerate is compromised, and prescribed fire can make that worse. ForestWatch and allies helped Senator Jackson's office include language to ensure that if a prescribed burn is conducted in these ecosystems, it will not result in or exacerbate “type conversion” to non-native grasses and weeds.

## Land and Water Conservation Fund

The LWCF has provided critical funding for more than 41,000 parks and projects across the country that protect and restore water and land, establish and maintain campgrounds, playgrounds, ball fields and trails, and enable public access the outdoors. Congress let the LWCF expire on September 30.

The good news is that the LWCF is wildly popular, and legislators from both sides of the aisle are working to restore funding. We have also created an online platform at [LPFW.org/LWCF](http://LPFW.org/LWCF) through which the public can quickly and easily send letters to their members of Congress urging them to reauthorize the Fund.

## Omnibus Appropriations Act

This bill to fund the federal government for the remainder of the year included several disastrous forestry management provisions. It exempts 3,000 acre fuel reduction projects from the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), reduces endangered species protections, and facilitates the construction of fuelbreaks and the reconstruction of roads on remote public lands.

## SB 901: Wildfire

SB 901 was crafted in a committee tasked with responding to the “new normal” of wildfires burning across California. We traveled to Sacramento with allies to



Forests comprised of large conifers like the cut Jeffrey pine seen here could be seriously impacted by recent pro-logging legislation.  
Photo by Bryant Baker

lobby committee members to write a sensible law that would counter the president's disparaging wildfire tweets and delivered a letter, signed by 16 environmental organizations, to urge legislators to develop science-based policy.

Instead, legislators allowed the biofuel and logging industries to focus the bill exclusively on harvesting forests for commercial sale in the name of wildfire mitigation. SB 901 also removes utility company accountability for power line ignitions, allows bigger trees to be logged, relaxes rules on road construction, and encourages bioenergy production (burning wood unsuitable for timber harvest, which can be three times more polluting than coal).

The bill blames forests for stealing water, assumes logging will reduce wildfire, and makes multiple false claims about wildfire history. Despite our best efforts, our coalition was only able to get the word “brush” removed from the final legislation, which will help reduce the impact of the bill on chaparral and coastal sage scrub.

## H.R. 2: House Farm Bill

The House version of the Farm Bill attacks America's forests and bedrock environmental laws. It includes numerous exemptions from NEPA for forestry projects up to 6,000 acres, allows logging and road building in protected roadless areas, and weakens the Endangered Species Act. Luckily, the Senate version of the Farm Bill contains none of these provisions and there is little support for HR2 except from House Republicans.

Visit [LPFW.org](http://LPFW.org) for more updates on these and other bills that impact our public lands.



Forests comprised of large conifers like the cut Jeffrey pine seen here could be seriously impacted by recent pro-logging legislation.  
Photo by Bryant Baker

# KEEPING UP THE FIGHT TO PROTECT PUBLIC LANDS

Ongoing efforts to ensure our public lands are protected from damaging activities

Below are some of the other issues affecting our local public lands that we've been working on over the last several months.

## Oil Waste Injection Into Sespe Aquifer

ForestWatch continues to monitor the Sespe aquifer exemption currently under consideration by the state water board and the Department of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR).

The Sespe Aquifer is within the Los Padres National Forest and adjacent to the Sespe Wilderness and the Sespe Condor Sanctuary, and a few thousand feet from the City of Fillmore's only water source. It was one of more than a thousand protected aquifers across California, identified in an EPA audit, that has been injected with oil wastewater under approval by DOGGR in violation of the Safe Drinking Water Act. We've helped the public submit 670 comments in opposition to the project, and continue to work with local elected officials to keep protections in place.

## New Oil Drilling on the Carrizo

As we wait for a decision on our appeal of the first new oil well and pipeline in the Carrizo Plain National Monument since it was established in 2001, we continue to work with legislators and make sure local voices are heard. ForestWatch and the Center for Biological Diversity maintain that the development would harm threatened and endangered wildlife, mar scenic views, and violates the Endangered Species Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the monument's resource-management plan.

The BLM has disregarded most of the concerns raised by conservation groups including its refusal to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Over a thousand letters opposing the development have already been sent to the BLM, and advocates continue to speak up.

## Commercial Logging Proposals

ForestWatch continues to help advocates speak out against plans to fast-track two massive commercial logging projects near Mt. Pinos, 4.5 square miles of some of the only truly forested land in the Los Padres and over 1,000 acres of the Antimony Inventoried Roadless Area. Both projects would be excluded from environmental review. The Forest Service has refused ForestWatch's repeated requests for all of their timber stand data and a listing of which rare plants and animals may be affected.

To fill this information gap, we've been working with our own biologists and other experts to determine the potential impacts these massive logging projects would have on local wildlife. The Forest Service's handling of the project reverses the it's previous commitment to more detailed Environmental Assessments (EAs) for logging and clearing projects which examine potential impacts, increase transparency, and allow the public and other scientists to weigh in.

## How You Can Get Involved

This year, we have been working on an online platform that the public can easily use to take action on local and national issues related to public lands. Just this year we have facilitated over 6,000 letters and comments to land management agencies and elected officials.

If you want to learn more and take action, visit [LPFW.org/action](http://LPFW.org/action).

*“The stakes have never been higher, and the fights have never been harder. The future of our public lands, wildlife, water, and our entire environment hangs in the balance. That's why we don't—and can't—give up.”*

- Rebecca August  
Public Lands Advocate



This is one of the sites where commercial logging is being proposed  
Photo by Bryant Baker



# WILD THINGS

## Condor #526

In September, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced that an endangered California condor had been found shot and killed just outside of the Los Padres National Forest near Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge. An investigation into this cruel and tragic killing of the bird known as Condor #526 is ongoing.

The life of #526 started when she hatched on May 4, 2009 in a cliff-side nest near Agua Blanca Creek in the Sespe Wilderness of the Los Padres National Forest. Her mother was bird #192, who sadly was found dead from lead poisoning in 2015, and her father was the famous bird #21 or AC-9—the oldest condor in the wild at the time. When biologists captured the remaining 22 wild condors in the 1980s, AC-9 was the last to be taken from the wild. Unfortunately, he also went missing in the wild in 2016 and is presumed dead. The tragedy that has afflicted this family of condors demonstrates just how tough it is for endangered condors to survive in the wild.

Condor #526 was like many other condors from the Southern California flock. She spent much of her time in the Sespe Wilderness and Sespe Condor Sanctuary, as well as Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge, and the Tehachapi Mountains. She even took occasional jaunts as far north as Sequoia and Sierra national forests. She was also one of the 28 condors who have been roosting in and near the site of a proposed commercial logging project on Tecuya Ridge for years. She last roosted there in September of 2017. Her father, #21, also roosted along the ridge before going missing.

While the recovery of California condors has been mostly a story of success, the death of #526 and other birds over the years shows that the species is still not fully safe from extinction. Now, more than ever, we must be vigilant in our work to protect this important and magnificent species that truly defines our region.

Rest in peace, #526.



# 11 YEARS RUNNING!

ForestWatch gets WILD! with 11<sup>th</sup> annual fundraiser in Ojai!

The 11th Annual Ojai WILD! on Sunday, June 3 was another wild success! With the support of our sponsors, guests, members, volunteers, and community, we welcomed

nearly 300 people who came out and raised over \$100,000 to support our efforts to protect our local public lands.

We are honored to host this event each year at The Thacher School's Upper Field, which provides a beautiful backdrop with views of the Los Padres National Forest and the Ojai Valley. The school's support of this event for eleven years (and counting) is truly amazing.

The food, as always, was delicious. We were treated to a fantastic dinner and appetizers from Seasons Catering, followed by a wonderful dessert and coffee reception by White Sage Catering and Beacon Coffee. Our thanks also go to Ampelos Cellars, Beckmen Vineyards, Topa Mountain Winery, and Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co. for serving their local wine and beer at the event.

Ventura Rental Party Center provided the tenting to make the day's heat a little more bearable. Delicate Productions and DSR Audio generously provided our sound and event production, Dwier Brown expertly emceed

# Ojai Wild!

11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

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the program, auctioneer Zan Aufderheide orchestrated the auction, and The Bryan Titus Trio provided the perfect soundtrack for the evening.

Carol Gravelle's stellar graphic designs, Ashley Lee's beautiful program, and photographer Luke Butcher's images all provided a classic touch.

Our deep appreciation goes to our tireless event committee whose members contribute months of their time and talents to bring this event to life—Rachael, Jon, Alex, Terri, Michelle, Ian, and Barry—we salute you!

And we are truly grateful to our 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 them.

With the momentum generated at this event, we are prepared to forge ahead with even more might and determination to protect and defend our local backcountry!

Special thanks goes out to the many sponsors who made this incredible event possible:



Our silent auction was a big hit this year (top), some attendees hit it big at the live auction (bottom). Photos by Butcher Snaps Media

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# THANK YOU!

# FORESTWATCH IN THE COMMUNITY

A look at all we've been up to in communities surrounding the forest

We spend a lot of time out in the Los Padres National Forest collecting data, at the office creating maps and educational materials, and at important meetings around the region. Between all of those activities, we are also heavily involved in the local community. Below are just a few ways we've been engaging the public along the Central Coast.

## Facilitating Forest Connections

Last month we hosted hikes for our monolingual Spanish-speaking community in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. This is an effort to expand access to our forest, provide an outdoor experience that is culturally relevant, and promote the many health benefits the Los Padres forest provides to our communities.

In Santa Barbara, we visited a section of the Jesusita Trail and discussed the medicinal properties of plants along the trail, while participants engaged by sharing personal stories of connections to the land. In Ojai, we hiked up Horn Canyon through the Thomas Fire burn scar before stopping at Thacher Creek to examine the river ecosystem. Several hikers expressed a long-standing interest in getting more acquainted with our public lands that stems back to childhood, but language and cultural barriers have prevented them from engaging. For some, it was their first time on the trail and the hikes left them ready for more exploration.



We're growing our outreach to the area's Latino community one hike at a time. Photo by Bryant Baker

The Latino population is one of the fastest growing demographics in the United States. They are also among the most underrepresented groups in conservation, outdoor recreation, and environmental education organizations. ForestWatch is taking additional steps to address this disparity by building new relationships and seeking partnerships with groups we may have unintentionally left out in the past. As an organization we believe that our supporters and stakeholders should reflect the communities we serve.

Over the summer we also partnered with a few youth focused organizations to support outdoor exploration in the Los Padres. Field trips help provide positive experiences in our forest that foster an appreciation for wildlife, wilderness and stewardship, and it is imperative that we work towards creating equitable access for children of all backgrounds.

Visit [LPFW.org/outreach](http://LPFW.org/outreach) to read more about our work facilitating outdoor connections.

## Participation in Local Events

ForestWatch has strived to participate at events along the Central Coast in order to educate the public about issues facing our national forest and other public lands, and to encourage people to take action and let their voice be heard.

Over the summer and fall, we had a booth at the Santa Maria Pride Celebration and Resource Fair, Conejo Valley PRIDE, the Wild and Scenic Film Festival in Ojai, Ojai Valley Mexican Fiesta, Santa Barbara Solstice Festival, Boys and Girls Club of Santa Barbara, and LagerFest in Buellton. We had a great time being a part of these wonderful events, and we look forward to participating at more community festivals throughout the year.



These volunteers braved the heat to remove relic fencing from the Carrizo! Photo by Bryant Baker

Visit [LPFW.org/ambassador](http://LPFW.org/ambassador) to learn how you can help us staff a booth at an event as a ForestWatch Ambassador.

## Forest Steward Projects

So far in 2018, nearly 200 volunteers have helped us remove more than 4,000 pounds of trash from nine different sites across the Los Padres National Forest!

During the spring, we focused on trash and microtrash cleanups at Big Falls and West Cuesta Ridge near San Luis Obispo, The Playground and La Cumbre Peak near Santa Barbara, and the Upper Sespe watershed north of Ojai.

The intense summer heat brings a short break to our stewardship projects, but we were able to team up with the American Alpine Club, Black Diamond, and the Santa Barbara Rock Gym for a trash and graffiti cleanup at Wheeler Gorge in June that was attended by over 70 volunteers!

This fall, we've led a team of volunteers at West Cuesta Ridge as part of California Coastal Cleanup Day, cleaned up Sespe Creek and Piedra Blanca in the Ojai Backcountry, and removed over 150 pounds of trash from Santa Paula Canyon.

And the year isn't over yet! We're excited to announce that we've received two big grants from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation as well as one from UCSB Coastal Fund to remove invasive tamarisk from the Santa Ynez River watershed and survey off-road degradation in the Santa Barbara Frontcountry. We will certainly need the help of volunteers over the course of a few weekend backpacking trips to complete all of this work ahead of us.

You can stay up to date with our upcoming projects and learn how to become a volunteer at [LPFW.org/volunteer](http://LPFW.org/volunteer).



# THE PRECEDENT-SETTING HISTORY OF THE SAN RAFAEL WILDERNESS

by Dr. Rupert Cutler, 2018 Wilderness Legacy Award Recipient

As I turned the corner in the Longworth House Office Building, I overheard Wayne Aspinall, the crusty old chairman of the House Interior Committee, shouting:

“...and I don't want another San Rafael!”

He was angry, nose to nose with Reynolds Florence of the Forest Service, poking his forefinger in Florence's chest for emphasis, when I happened upon them in the doorway of the Interior Committee hearing room. It was soon after President Lyndon Johnson had signed (on March 21, 1968) the law creating the San Rafael Wilderness in the Los Padres National Forest. The next national forest primitive area up for wilderness review by Aspinall's committee was Mt. Jefferson in Oregon, and Aspinall was demanding that the Forest Service back off its heavy lobbying of members of his committee on

behalf of its wilderness boundary recommendations. (Lobbying of Congress by federal agencies is prohibited by the Anti-Lobbying Act of 1919.)

Aspinall was upset by the surprisingly controversial nature of the first wilderness proposal to come before Congress following the Wilderness Act of 1964—San Rafael.

The testy nature of those congressional hearings, during which Santa Barbara conservationists assisted by staff members of The Wilderness Society and Sierra Club won a precedent-setting victory for all local wilderness-advocacy groups in the future, was not to the chairman's liking. Or the Forest Service's, for that matter, because the agency's wilderness boundary recommendation had been ignored. The Santa Barbara conservationists' more expansive boundary recommendation, that included grassy ridgeline potreros.

Ever afterward—as the National Wilderness Preservation System grew from 9 million acres to 110 million acres—it was the San Rafael Wilderness precedent that empowered local wilderness committees to have their “citizens' proposals” given at least equal consideration with those



The entrance to the San Rafael Wilderness near Manzana Creek. Photo by Bryant Baker

of the land-administering agency, be it the Forest Service, the National Park Service, of the Fish and Wildlife Service, at wilderness-classification congressional hearings.

The inside story of how legislation was passed to re-classify the San Rafael Primitive Area as statutory wilderness, including the blow-by-blow account of relations between Forest Service and Wilderness Society staff members—“Your (San Rafael) proposal is as phony as a three-dollar bill,” said Bill Worf of the Forest Service to Stewart Brandborg and Rupert Cutler of The Wilderness Society—is worthy of recounting on that legislation's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

*Dr. Rupert Cutler is the recipient of the 2018 Wilderness Legacy Award for his efforts to protect the San Rafael (see below). He will be receiving the award and speaking at two events in Santa Barbara in October (see Pages 8-9). Thank you, Rupert, for a lifetime working to preserve wild places.*



One of the earliest photographs of the Hurricane Deck (1936). Photo courtesy of UC Berkeley Library

## 2018 WILDERNESS LEGACY AWARD: DR. RUPERT CUTLER

We're honored to present this year's Wilderness Legacy Award to Dr. Rupert Cutler for his key role in securing the designation of the San Rafael Wilderness. As the Assistant Executive Director for The Wilderness Society in the 1960s, Rupert Cutler was instrumental in working with local residents throughout Santa Barbara County to secure passage of the San Rafael Wilderness Act. Signed into law in 1968 and celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year, the San Rafael Wilderness was the first citizen-driven wilderness campaign and still serves as a model for how local residents can join together to preserve wilderness lands for current and future generations to enjoy. Dr. Cutler went on to serve as assistant secretary of agriculture for conservation, research, and education in the Carter Administration, as senior vice president of the National Audubon Society and president/CEO of Defenders of Wildlife. He now resides in Roanoke, Virginia, where he has served as founding executive director of both Virginia's Explore Park and the Western Virginia Land Trust, now the Blue Ridge Land Conservancy. Since retiring in 1999 he has served on several nonprofit agency boards and citizen advisory committees, including six years on the Roanoke City Council and eight years as an appointee of Governors Warner and Kaine on the board of trustees of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation.

## 50<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY BASH & SANTA BARBARA WILD!

Join us at these great events celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the San Rafael Wilderness!

We have two upcoming events in Santa Barbara celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the San Rafael Wilderness! These are open to the public and both feature distinguished guest speaker, Dr. Rupert Cutler.

### 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Bash for the San Rafael

Thursday, October 18, 7 PM

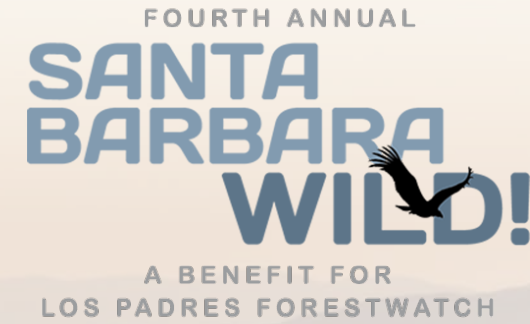
The Club & Guest House at UCSB

We are delighted to welcome Dr. Rupert Cutler all the way from his home in Virginia to speak at the 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Bash for the San Rafael Wilderness! Rupert was instrumental in securing passage of the San Rafael Wilderness Act of 1968.

Enjoy beer from Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co. as well as local wine and appetizers as we hear from Dr. Rupert Cutler about the 1960s-era fight to get the San Rafael Primitive Area officially designated as Wilderness in order to be preserved forever. He will be speaking about the history of the area, the community-led campaign to protect it, and the tough political battles he and others faced at the time. His efforts became a model for other Wilderness campaigns around the country.

This event will take place on the beautiful Club & Guest House's terrace overlooking the lagoon at UCSB.

Tickets are \$10 and include 2 drink tickets and appetizers. Register for this event at [LPFW.org/bash](http://LPFW.org/bash).



### 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Santa Barbara WILD!

Sunday, October 21, 3 - 6:30 PM

Garden Street Academy, Santa Barbara

You can also see Dr. Rupert Cutler speak about the San Rafael Wilderness as he accepts this year's Wilderness Legacy Award at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Santa Barbara WILD!

This is a premier local event that helps us raise funds to protect public lands across the region. The theme of this year's benefit is "Celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the San Rafael Wilderness." It will feature a delicious dinner and incredible array of silent auction items and live auction adventure packages. You can even bid on a full-scale replica of a San Rafael Wilderness Sign, just as you would find out in the national forest!

This event will take place at the beautiful Playing Fields at the Garden Street Academy. See Page 9 for more details about this event. Reserve your seat today at [sbwild.org](http://sbwild.org).



Join conservationists in this celebration of the San Rafael Wilderness while enjoying dinner and a live auction. Photo by Butcher Snaps Media



## STELLAR INTERNS

Every quarter we are lucky to have great interns from local colleges. Since spring, we have had two interns help work with us on a variety of important projects.

**Juliet Bachtel** - an recent graduate of the Environmental Studies program at UCSB, Juliet came to ForestWatch with a passion for both legal and environmental issues, which often overlap. As our Conservation Intern for the Spring and Summer Quarters, she worked on a number of projects, including helping us research the presence of endangered, sensitive, and rare wildlife in the areas where commercial logging is being proposed. Juliet was also instrumental in helping us conduct various volunteer projects.

**Alex Irvin** - Our Conservation GIS Intern for the Summer Quarter, Alex used his background in computer science to develop a code that analyzes endangered California condor tracking data to determine where these special birds are roosting throughout the Los Padres National Forest. Now we have perhaps the most detailed database of condor roost locations in Southern California. This will be key to our efforts to protect condors from detrimental activities. Alex will finish his M.S. at UCSB's Bren School in 2019. Special thanks to Jules Zimmer and Carolyn Cogan for funding his internship.







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Santa Barbara

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Culinary Glamping Weekend at Blue Sky Center  
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Chris Fossek