

The ESCONDIDO CREEK Conservancy



The Watershed Voice

Protecting & Restoring The Escondido Creek Watershed Since 1991



Kevin Barnard | President of TECC

This past February I attended an event at the Stone Brewery Bistro and Gardens at their request. The purpose of the event was to meet with city officials from Richmond, Virginia, to talk about a project that Stone is proposing to site on the James River in Richmond. This would be a similar facility to the Stone facility in Escondido, but is on a river, will rehabilitate an abandoned warehouse/dock facility, and connect to areas of open space, trails, and nearby neighborhoods. You can take a look at the proposal at this link (<http://blog.stonebrewing.com/index.php/stone-brewing-richmond/>)

Needless to say, I was envious of this incredible opportunity for Richmond, and it reminded me of what The Escondido Creek Conservancy (TECC) has envisioned for Escondido Creek as it meanders 26 miles through urban, suburban, rural, and wild areas.

Over the past 24 years, TECC has built a unique portfolio of incredibly rare habitats that span several areas of the Escondido Creek watershed, and these lands are mostly connected to open spaces owned and managed by other non-profits and governmental agencies. Planning for the future of these open spaces is a critical function of TECC. How will they be managed, and how will that management be funded? How will we connect not only open spaces so that they function as viable habitat, but how will we connect people, especially via alternative transportation (hiking, biking, equestrian) with those open spaces so that they are protected, yet highly valued. We've come to understand that if something isn't highly valued, it's impossible to protect.

To begin to answer these questions and create a blueprint for our future, we have developed a five-year strategic plan with short-term, mid-term, and long range goals that can be viewed at www.escondidocreek.org.

As we take steps to implement the strategic plan, you will see TECC working with new partners to implement its updated vision:

Through the Conservancy's leadership, the Escondido Creek watershed will become a model of vibrant urban communities and viable natural ecosystems thriving together.

In addition to our more traditional conservation work preserving open space lands in the unincorporated areas of the watershed and providing educational opportunities to watershed residents, TECC is building a partnership with the City of Escondido to help the city restore the creek along the 7-mile stretch within the city boundaries.

Stay tuned for some important announcements as we move forward in 2015.

2015 Spring Issue



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Upcoming Events for Your Calendar!

Walk With A Tracker | 8:30 -11:30 am

First Sunday of Every Month

Interpretive Nature Walks | 10:00 - 11:00 am

Second and Fourth Sunday of Every Month

High Tech Student Produced Watershed Exhibit

April 1 – June 30, 2015

Bill the Bug Guy | 10:00 - 11:30 am

April 11, May 23, June 20, July 11, August 8, September 12

Photo Contest Exhibit

January 1 – March 31, 2015

TECC's Open Office | May 9, 2015 | 5:00 - 7:30 pm

Stop by TECC's Open Office

104 C, W Grand Avenue, Escondido 92025

The Interpretive Center is located at:

8833 Harmony Grove Road • Escondido, CA 92029

Land Preservation Update

by Ann Van Leer, Executive Director, TECC

In January, TECC submitted a grant to the San Diego Association of Government's (SANDAG) Environmental Mitigation Program to minimize threats to sensitive and threatened species and their habitats from invasive, non-native species and wildfires. The proposed project includes surveying, threat reduction, enhancement, restoration, and monitoring in Elfin Forest to benefit the rare *Hermes copper* butterfly and two vulnerable native plants, *Encinitas baccharis* and *Sticky dudleya*. All three species are residents of the Escondido Creek watershed, though currently found only in very small numbers.

In 1920, butterfly enthusiast John A. Comstock said about the *Hermes copper*, "It will always be a rarity, and may, in fact, someday become extinct, if San Diego continues to expand at its present rate."¹ The beautiful *Hermes* butterfly lives in coastal sage scrub (CSS) habitat in San Diego County and northern Baja California and is now, due to habitat loss, a candidate species for protection under the federal Endangered Species Act. *Encinitas baccharis* is listed by the State of California as endangered and by the federal government as threatened. Despite its name it is no longer found in Encinitas, largely due to elimination of its habitat. *Sticky dudleya*, a native plant of California, is sometimes known as sticky liveforever, ironic considering it's now rarely found.

“It will always be a rarity, and may, in fact, someday become extinct, if San Diego continues to expand at its present rate.”¹

– John A. Comstock, 1920

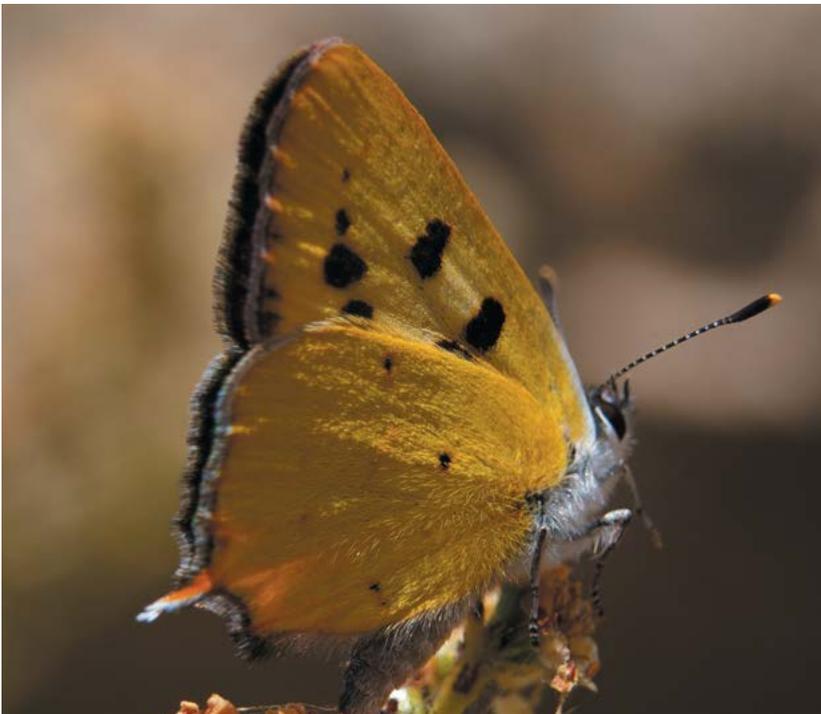


Photo used with permission of San Diego State University

Fire and development are the largest threats to these species. TECC has proposed a project, in partnership with researchers at San Diego State University, to remove highly flammable non-native invasive trees (including the removal of up to 275 eucalyptus and other non-native trees) and non-native plants from conserved lands and restoring those lands with native plants.

Removal of these non-native plants and trees, especially eucalyptus, will reduce the threat of fire in the watershed as eucalyptus trees are known to wick fire from one location to the next. The project also includes the planting of native plants known to support the *Hermes copper* butterfly, including spiny redberry.

¹ Our thanks to the Center for Biological Diversity for this quote.

We Work to be Better Communicators

Thank you to all of those who responded at the end of last year to our first TECC opinion survey! We learned a lot from you and are pleased to know you are happy with our work. We also learned you'd like us to be better communicators, and provide more details regarding TECC's activities. While it is not an excuse, our very active Board of Directors and hard-working 2.5 staff are often so busy doing good things for the watershed, we just don't spend as much time as we should telling our supporters about TECC's efforts.

Many TECC supporters know that when we purchase land or work on sensitive conservation projects, those discussions many times must be kept confidential. On land transactions, usually we cannot provide details until after close of escrow. Our commitment to our supporters is that we will tell you as much information as we can, when we can.

Part of doing that is modernizing and updating our social media platforms, primarily our website, www.escondidocreek.org, Facebook page and Twitter feed, so that TECC supporters who choose to can be kept better informed of our activities.

It means also creating TECC's first ever strategic plan so that TECC supporters, board members and partners will know better TECC's vision and the greater context for TECC's work. You will find TECC's 2015-2020 five year strategic plan on our updated website. Our staff and board members are now tracking their work against the new five-year plan.

Additionally, to measure our progress, shortly we will produce TECC's first of what we hope to be annual progress reports, which are intended to detail what we've done in a given year towards achieving the goals of our strategic plan. That report will include a copy of the watershed map you can see on our updated website at www.escondidocreek.org. Much of what you see on the map in green is due to TECC's work over the past 24 years, or the work of TECC's partners. We will do a better job telling you about it in 2015.

We greatly appreciate your comments, feedback, and suggestions. To help us, please check out our website, like us on Facebook, and follow us Twitter. Thank you for your support and always for your feedback!

Save The Date!

You're invited to our new office opening event on May 9th between 5 and 7:30 p.m. Our event coincides with the Escondido Second Saturday Art Walk so we hope you will swing by 104 W Grand Ave Suite C to meet the TECC board and staff and then hit Escondido downtown to enjoy the restaurants and art galleries!

RSVP information@escondidocreek.org.

The ESCONDIDO CREEK Conservancy

2014 Donors

We are grateful for the support of new and returning donors. This list includes all new and existing donors who made a gift in 2014.

This list includes all new supporters, support renewals, donations and sponsorships received last year.

If you feel that your name has been inadvertently omitted, please contact Ann Hough at information@escondidocreek.org or phone (760) 471-9354.

The Watershed Voice

Protecting The Escondido Creek Watershed Since 1991

Guardians of the Creek (\$10,000 plus)

The Charles Stout Foundation
Steve and Nona Barker
Leonard Wittwer and Martha Blane
The San Diego Foundation-Conservation Catalyst Grant
San Diego Foundation-Anonymous Fund
San Diego Foundation-Myron Eichen Memorial Fund

Defenders of the Creek (\$5,000 to \$9,999)

San Diego Foundation-Orca Fund

Advocates of the Creek (\$1000 to \$4,999)

Olivenhain Municipal Water District
Kenneth and Bonita Baumgartner
Ken Blanchard Companies
Bill Tippets
James Ellerbrock
Christward Ministry Inc.
Palomar Audubon Society
Susan Hayes
Richard Murphy
R & F Products
Dennis Kibler
Jack Paxton
Kevin Barnard
Jon Dummer and Debbie O'Neil
Lucille Khoury
Interpretive Center Donation Box
Michael and Juanita Moe
Habitat West
Eagle Creek
Elfin Forest Community Foundation

Protectors of the Creek (\$500 to \$999)

Gerald Varty
Tom and Cheryl Munnecke
DLM Engineering
Nancy Reed
Russ McLee
Robert and Peggy Petitmermet
Pamela Gray
Denis Trefecanty
Gregory McBain
San Diego Bike Association
Kai Johnson
Elinor Foulke
Mark Sherman
Jeff and Shannon Anderson
Tanya Golz Ingorvate
JP Theberge
Jeff and Carolyn Swenerton

Frank and Gail Twohy
Bruce and Linda Hamilton
Cathy Carey
Tim and Claudia Costanzo

Benefactors of the Creek (\$100 to \$499)

Greg and Kathleen Webber
Ricky Schlesinger and Judy Nakatomi
Mary Pleil
Carla Hayes
Anton and Nancy Endress
Alta Kisselburgh
Robert Mikuteit
Jean-Francois Erforth
Paul Bergford
Jill Campbell
George Sardina
Douglas Gillingham
Geoffrey Smith
Scott Sutherland
Richard Barron and Janathan Allen
Manu and Minoo Sohaey
Michael and Joni Calhoun
Pamela Stahl
William and Margaret Robison
David and Kim Zivkovich
Don and Mary Nelson
Jeffrey and Sarah Witt
Rebecca Johnson
David and Joy Jackson
Frederick Wollman
Craig and Cathrine Greene
Ginger Lamp
Peter and Patricia Benson
Carolee Ferguson
Douglas and Elizabeth Dill
Hajime and Janice Ohno
Vicki Anthony
Millicent Froehlich
Marcelle McMillin
Mary Murphy
Michael & Eveline Bustillos
Robert and Janet McGurk
Thomas and Donna Golich
Everett and Dare Delano
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Richard Mazey and Collette Larsen
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Janie DeCelles
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Eugene and Marian Gabrych
Danny and Nancy Goodrich
Richard and Patricia Wagner
Richard and Joanne Hubbard

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Alden and Ann Hough
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Wendy Barker
Deanna Pierson
Michael Gilligan
Jennifer Coburn
Stu Shaffer
Chris and Linda Khoury
Lita Bowles
David and Edith Felker
Elfin Forest Reserve Iron Ranger
Rebecca Arnold
Laura Mitchell
Kim MacConnel
Katrina Stainton
Newton and Jerre Stafford
San Dieguito Group
Smart Cities Prevail
Tony De Bellis and Melanie Fallon
Leah Bookhamer
Szekely Family Foundation
David and Marcia Radel
Greg and Georgie Birch
David and Amita Bardwick
Timothy and Gudrun Ulman
Gloria Murphy
Edward Stainton
Raymond and Cheryl Meek
Woman's Club of Escondido
Michael and Nancy Sampson
Ann Van Leer
Brent Alsapach
Ron Forster and Laura Hunter

Friends of the Creek (Up to \$99)

Amazon Smile Foundation
Cielito Dalidi
Stephen and Judith Slane
Dorothy Kline
Thomas and Margaret Knothe
Susan Murray
Sandra Dabasinskas
Christina Reinhart
Matt Merritt
Patricia Borchmann
Anthony and Carolyn Kurtz
Michael Mareck
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Randy Smith
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Peter and Winona Rowat
Blake Isaac
Alfred and Karin Esser
Daniel Silver
Chris Clark
Julie Graboi
Diana Towne
Ronald Miller
Loretta and Deborah Brown
William and Marilyn Morgan
Donald and Anne Hanley

What's New at the Interpretive Center

by Simon Breen, Education Manager

Donor Trees at the Elfin Forest Interpretive Center

Another absolutely stunning donor tree has been installed opposite the original tree on the Interpretive Center's front porch. The tree was created by metalwork artist Jennifer Coburn, and features beautiful imagery of wildlife accented with stained glass. Donors to the Interpretive Center are featured on bronze, silver, or gold-colored plates on the leaves of this beautiful sycamore replica, depending on their contribution, with the biggest donors receiving an engraving on the trunk. Please come out and admire this inspiring tribute to our wonderful donors and our wildlands.

Milkweed for Monarchs

Change is in the air...and the soil...at the Elfin Forest Interpretive Center. We recently planted some native California showy milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*) in front of the building. This variety of milkweed serves as a food and habitat plant for the rapidly disappearing monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*). The sharp butterfly population decline has been linked to the disappearance of milkweed, so we're doing our small part to keep these two species abundant. You can help too by planting this drought-tolerant plant your garden.



Photo used with permission of www.laspilatas.com

New Trail Patrol Graduates

On February 7th a new group of 12 new recruits completed their six-hour training course and officially became members of the Elfin Forest Trail Patrol volunteer team! Combined with our inaugural group, we now have a total of 19 volunteers patrolling the trails of the Reserve and enhancing the trail-user experience.

The new volunteers include:

Helen Bierman	Pam Kephart	Becky Sox
Walter Haslop	Calvin Marshall	Kara West
Gigi Hurst	Stephanie Neal	Stan Williams
Bob Kephart	Don Nelson	Leonard Wittwer

The next training course is in May, and space is limited.

Email simon@escondidocreek.org to RSVP if you'd like to join.

Fire Recovery Update

For the past several months now we have been sending photographers out to areas representative of different habitat types that have been affected by last year's Cocos Fire. Here are a few before-and-after snapshots. You can see more photos at www.escondidocreek.org.



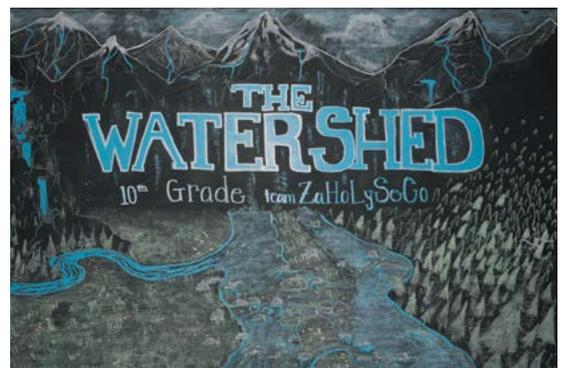
Richard Murphy



Richard Murphy

New Student-Produced Watershed Exhibit at the Interpretive Center

This past fall a group of 10th graders at High Tech High North County explored the world around them, hiking, questioning, experimenting, and immersing themselves in our local watersheds. The result of this discovery-based project is a new artistic and informative exhibit on display at the Elfin Forest interpretive Center. The exhibit will debut on Friday, May 1, 2015.



Nocturnal Survey at Bridges and Santa Fe Creek Preserve



Great horned owl photos copyrighted by Scott Streit

During November 2014, San Diego Habitat Conservancy Habitat Manager, Jim Rocks, and Program Coordinator, Sarah Krejca, conducted an annual night survey at the 112-acre Bridges and Santa Fe Creek Preserve along Escondido Creek.

Surveying at night provides us the opportunity to discover animals, particularly invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, and owls that are inactive during the day. The night started off very quietly, unlike the 2013 survey when the night air was filled with the familiar sounds of the Pacific chorus frog. This sharp decline in the number of Pacific chorus frogs may be attributed to the time of year and/or day during which the survey occurred (the 2013 survey was conducted later in the evening in May) since cold temperatures decrease amphibian activity.

Jim and Sarah's first task was to trap and remove non-native crayfish from Escondido Creek. This is done in an effort to protect native animals, such as Pacific chorus frogs (aka Pacific tree frogs), which are consumed by the invasive crayfish. After Jim and Sarah caught as many crayfish as they could, they continued surveying the preserve and discovered that wolf spiders are prevalent along the creek. This was an exciting discovery as these spiders have previously been undocumented within the preserve.

Jim and Sarah then headed to look for signs of owls nesting within the mature riparian forest lining Escondido Creek. Tall eucalyptus trees are also present and although these are invasive, they provide valuable nesting habitat for raptors and other birds. Jim and Sarah were hoping to spot a great horned owl since Jim had previously seen one in 2012 nesting in what was likely the abandoned nest of a red-tailed hawk. (The great horned owl does not build its own nest). After some time, Jim and Sarah heard a series of "Hoo H'hoos" unique to the great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*). After some trekking and a bit of luck, Jim spotted a great horned owl perched atop a tall eucalyptus that was quickly joined by a companion.

The pair began to perform a duet of alternating calls, Jim and Sarah quickly realized this was likely a monogamous breeding pair letting them know that this is their territory. After allowing Jim and Sarah to watch them calling for nearly a half hour, the pair went on their way. For Jim and Sarah, this was an epic ending to a productive night of surveying and a great sign that the preserve is continuing to provide valuable habitat for a wide array of species.

Join Us on April 25th for the Creek to Bay Clean Up!

This year TECC, partnering with the City of Escondido, will be participating in the I Love a Clean San Diego's signature event, the Creek to Bay Clean Up on Saturday, April 25th from 9 am until noon. As part of the national Great American Cleanup, thousands of volunteers will gather at more than 90 coastal and inland sites around San Diego County to help preserve the local environment by cleaning and beautifying these outdoor areas.

The TECC event will be held at Harmony Grove Road, where the creek leaves the concrete channel and returns to its natural state. Volunteers of all ages are encouraged to sign up online at www.creektobay.org. Registration for the Creek to Bay Cleanup begins April 1.



Free Upcoming Lecture Series Events

Scheduling for our 2015 Lecture Series is underway. This year we will be hosting one presentation every third Thursday of the month from 6:00-7:15 from May until November. All events are free to attend and will take place at the Elfin Forest Interpretive Center, located at 8833 Harmony Grove Road, Escondido 92029. Here are a few of the upcoming talks:

May 21st: The Importance of Pollinators and Their Conservation

Pollinators play a vital role in our ecosystem. Learn about various pollinators in our area, including the helpful hummingbird to the majestic monarch butterfly. Hear about how habitat loss and fragmentation is affecting these invaluable species and what we can do to help. Presented by Tom Merriam and Pat Flanagan of Butterfly Farm, in Vista, CA

June 18th: The History of Escondido and its "Hidden" Creek

Water has had a tremendous impact on Escondido's evolution. Learn about Escondido's history, with a special emphasis on the creek, at a lecture illustrated with wonderful historic photos from the Escondido History Center. Presented by Wendy Barker, Executive Director of the Escondido History Center in Grape Day Park.

July 16th: Nature's Rhythms: The Original Mind-Body Medicine

The cycles of the seasons, light and dark, movement and stillness are reflected in every level of our anatomy and behavior. The latest mind-body medical approaches are based on this recognition. Learn how a natural vistas reduce pain and improve mood, how morning light guides the sleep cycle, how mid-day heat stimulates deep rest and recovery, how minds and bodies—like rivers and lakes—can spontaneously heal when liberated from unnatural influences. Presented by Jim Cahill, BCB—a former brain researcher at Scripps Research Institute, and developer of Mindfulness-Based Biofeedback.

If you would like to attend any of these talks, please RSVP coordinator Simon Breen: simon@escondidocreek.org.

Become a Supporter!

Join Our Conservation Efforts by Becoming a Supporter or Renewing Your Support

The Escondido Creek Conservancy (TECC) is a non-profit public benefit corporation dedicated to the preservation, enhancement, and protection of the natural open space within the Escondido Creek watershed. We support educational programs and compatible outdoor recreation within the watershed.

Not a Supporter of The Escondido Creek Conservancy?

Join today and add your voice to the hundreds of local people who already look to the Conservancy to protect and preserve the natural open space within the Escondido Creek watershed!

Here's How Your Support Contributed Last Year

- In the aftermath of the Coco's wildfire that damaged many of the oak trees in Harmony Grove, TECC responded by providing the services of an arborist to visit properties affected and advise local residents about tree care. Coy Johnston, President of the Harmony Grove Spiritualist Association commented "Without this arborist visit, I may not have had the knowledge to stand up for the trees we left to regrow and recover. Too many people view a fire-damaged tree as needing to be cut down. I learned about the process of natural cycles..."
- In partnership with the Olivenhain Water District and the San Diego Zoo, hundreds of grade school children from urban north San Diego County took field-trips to the Elfin Forest Interpretive Center and engaged in hands-on learning and discovery about local wildlife, plants, and natural history. We also launched a volunteer Trail Patrol program in the Elfin Forest to enhance the trail-user experience. Your support will help us continue to deliver our mission to preserve and restore a natural Escondido Creek watershed.

Donate Online At: www.escondidocreek.org or Detach & Mail the Form on the Right to: TECC | PO Box 460791 | Escondido, CA 92046

The Escondido Creek Conservancy Board of Directors & Staff

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Richard Murphy | Treasurer

Steve Barker | Director

Greg McBain | Director

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Jerry Harmon | Director

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Simon Breen | Education Manager

Ann Hough | Managing Director

YES! I want to support TECC's mission of watershed protection. Here's my gift!

Thank you for your gift. Donations are tax deductible to the extent provided by law. TECC's tax identification is 33-0497525.

Please Make Checks Payable To: The Escondido Creek Conservancy

Mail This Form To: TECC PO Box 460791, Escondido, CA 92046

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

Phone: () _____

Email: _____

Monthly Support Options:

I (we) authorize The Escondido Creek Conservancy to initiate debit entries to my (our) Checking Account/Savings Account (select one) indicated below and debit the same to their account.

Date: _____

Bank Name: _____

Branch: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

Account Number: _____

Routing Number: _____

Amount (Minimum \$10): _____

Start Date: _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Annual Support Options:

Student | \$10 Creek Protector | \$500

Limited Income | \$25 Creek Advocate | \$1,000

Individual | \$35 Creek Defender | \$5,000

Joint/Family | \$50 Creek Guardian | \$10,000

Creek Benefactor | \$100

Please Charge My Credit Card:

One time Monthly Other Amount _____

Visa MasterCard Amex

Credit Card #: _____

Exp Date: _____ Sec. Code on Back of Card: _____

Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____

For gifts of stock or land, please contact Ann Hough, Managing Director at (760) 471-9354 or information@escondidocreek.org.

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The Escondido Creek Conservancy

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