



Please join in our conservation efforts by becoming a member.

Watershed Voice

The ESCONDIDO CREEK Conservancy

A Publication of The Escondido Creek Conservancy

FALL Edition 2006

Hale Avenue Resource Recovery Facility: Is It Up to the Task?

The San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board in October will consider a settlement offer by the city of Escondido in response to the Regional Board's December 2005 Administrative Civil Liability Assessment of \$1,162,500 in penalties.

This figure is based on numerous violations of federal law prohibiting discharge of treated effluent into the Creek and for exceeding maximum permissible levels of pollutants discharged into the Pacific Ocean.

The complaint against the City noted that the city had more than 450 violations of effluent limitations, more than 350,000



gallons of discharges to the creek and at least 15 instances in which it failed to sub-

mit reports.

A State Water Board engineer who investigated the complaint noted, "In summary, the effluent limitation violations at the HARRF were probably caused by a combination of events, most of which could have been controlled by the treatment plant staff if all of the equipment had been functioning properly."

The city's proposed settlement does not address any corrections to the system. There are reasons why the HARRF has failed so dramatically to properly treat sewage. Further, according to the complaint, the maximum total penalty amount

Continued on Page 3

'Concerts on the Creek' Benefit Event a Grand Success!

The Escondido Creek Conservancy held its fifth annual 'Concerts on the Creek' program on Sept. 16 to benefit watershed protection in Escondido Creek.

Acclaimed singer-songwriter Peggy Watson performed her original compositions in a unique outdoor setting at the Costanzo family residence in Elfin Forest.

Musician David Beldock appeared in an accompanying role.

Featured in the photograph to the right, concert patrons enjoy conversation and a meal prior to the performance.

Pictured from the right: Dave Fege; Camille Armstrong, wife of Executive Director Geoffrey Smith; Emily Young, with The San Diego

Foundation; and Anne Fege.

Tables were decorated with flowers provided by the host committee members.

In the left photograph, Peggy Watson and David Beldock perform original acoustic folk songs to a crowd of 80 enthusiastic guests.



Up and Down the Creek

By Geoffrey D. Smith, Executive Director

A Day in the Watershed

The rising sun shines brightly through my bedroom window, its warm glow filtered by the leaves of the Engelmann oak tree outside – one of many trees preserved in my clustered residential development near the creek. The cheerful calls of wren tit birds greet the day. It is Saturday, and I've got places to go! I don my TECC daypack and walk down to the creek for a brisk walk in the morning air, inhaling the moist freshness of the morning dew.

A mile from my house, I stop at the outdoor bistro for a cup of java and a muffin, and read the *North County Times* while enjoying the view at this reconstructed wetland in Grape Day Park on Escondido Boulevard. Volunteers are gathering for a creek cleanup and walk along the mixed-use hike, bike and equestrian trail, and a group of plein air artists are capturing images of the snowy egrets in the reeds. I move on. I flash my membership card at the bicycle rental stand and hop on board a custom mountain bike for a quick ride along the path to the Bottle Peak recreation area, where I join a group of power hikers just preparing to hike to the top.

The view from Bottle Peak is breathtaking on this spring morning, and views of the San Dieguito watershed are intriguing – but that's another day!

Checking my bike at the rental node and grabbing a veggie burrito at the snack bar there, I board the public transit bus for a trip down Harmony Grove to the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve. I walk down the short interpretive trail to the Interpretive center, where I am greeted by a friendly ranger, who reminds me



of the astronomy talk this evening. I take a moment to renew my TECC membership with a volunteer there, then wander down to the creek to reflect in the shade of the oak and sycamore canopy. An archaeologist from the San Pasqual Kumeyaay reservation is giving a talk inside the center, so I sit in for a half hour – fascinating Native American history! I purchase the informative book and thank the author.

As I leave the Interpretive Center, I encounter a Boy Scout Troop on a through-hike from San Elijo Lagoon; they are camping overnight at the primitive campground at the Mount Whitney Open Space Preserve and have stopped to fill their water bottles with delicious OMWD water at the drinking fountain. The Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Volunteer Fire Department is hosting a benefit chili cook-off, and I partake of dinner at the outdoor picnic area. As the sun sets, the ranger signals the start of the evening hike – a moonlight walk up the 'Way Up Trail' for a star-gazing presentation by volunteer astronomers from the Cal State San Marcos physics department, complete with telescopes and constellation maps. The dark-night sky in Elfin Forest is particularly suited to this use, and the stars virtually rain down on us like diamonds.

I reflect on the Conservancy's recent successful campaign to purchase this 100-acre 'Cielo Azul' property from the developer who had planned to build 17 custom homes on this mesa overlooking San Elijo Lagoon. I smile.

It was a beautiful day.

**That's my vision – what's yours?
Send yours to me at information@escondidocreek.org.**

Visit the TECC website to subscribe to the free 'e-TECC' electronic bulletin for up-to-the-minute news and activities. Issued monthly.



PAGE 1 BANNER PHOTOS:

In the photograph to the left, Volunteers on Coastal Cleanup Day on Sept. 16 celebrate a successful event on Harmony Grove Road. Six volunteers

working with TECC Board Member Leonard Wittwer filled a 30-yard roll-off dumpster with trash and debris that had been illegally dumped at TECC's Quarry Property.

TECC relies on your generous support to further its mission of watershed protection. Here are some ways to give...



Donate your car or boat. Remember to specify 'The Escondido Creek Conservancy' as your beneficiary. Call 1-800-766-CARE or www.cars4causes.net

Dozens of merchant partners (including Major Market, Pep Boys, Claim Jumper and others), have created a system that rewards customer loyalty by contributing a percentage of purchases to TECC. It's simple and convenient, all you need to do is register your grocery club card and debit/credit card(s) at www.escrip.com.



DONATE NOW

Secure Donations by GroundSpring.org. Donate online with your debit or credit card. Conveniently contribute a single gift, or provide ongoing support by establishing automated monthly recurring charges. www.escondidocreek.org

Give less to the IRS by giving more to TECC! That's right – you can deduct your donations to TECC, a 501(c)(3) tax-deductible charity. Please consider a year-end donation for 2006!



Did you know... After your lifetime, remaining retirement assets will be heavily taxed if left to family but will have full value if left to TECC? We invite you to join others who are making a difference through TECC and Endow San Diego. Call our Executive Director at 760.471.9354 for details about this important endowment program that can derive personal benefits for you NOW.

In the smaller photograph, volunteer Frank McCulloch tackles a dusty dumpster full of debris.

Photos/Geoffrey Smith

TECC HONOR ROLL

The Escondido Creek Conservancy gratefully acknowledges the following donors for their generosity during the past 12 months.

Friends of the Creek

Brent Alspach
Anonymous
Camille Armstrong &
Geoffrey Smith
Richard & Dolores Barber
Steve & Nona Barker
Kevin Barnard
Kenneth and Yvette Beauvais
Jayne Ellen Bernasconi
Laurilyn Burson
Jean Costanzo
Dee & Eleanor Cross
Garrett Emslie
Dare and Everett DeLano
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Dolores Welty

Connie Witt
Leo & Wilma Wittwer
The Women's Club of Escondido

Sponsor (\$500+)
The Costanzo Family

Patron (\$1,000+)
Anonymous
The Blane & Wittwer Family

Benefactor (\$2,500+)
Habitat West, Inc.

Grants

The Elfin Forest Community
Foundation
The Jack and Jill Campbell Fund
at The San Diego Foundation
The Kohlberg Foundation
The Orca Fund at The San Diego
Foundation
The San Diego Foundation
The Charles Stout Family
Foundation
Supervisor Pam Slater,
County of San Diego
Anonymous

In-Kind Gifts of Property or Services

Silent Auction Items

Adventure 16
Chaparral Honey, Inc.
Eagle Creek Travel Gear
Elfin Valley Nursery
Jeff & Carolyn Swenerton
Judy Nakatomi
Patagonia, Cardiff
Prana
'R' Hay and Grain
REI
Santa Ysabel General Store &
Antiques
Say Provence
The Golden Door
Timothy Costanzo
Yoga and Meditation Center

Other

Anderson's Seed Co. - office
chair
Eric Anderson - space for office
Martha Blane - office decorations
Tim Costanzo - electrical hookup
for office, shelving
Eagle Creek Travel Gear - secure
space for archival storage
Habitat West - multi-function print-
er
Hansen Associates - TECC logo,
graphics support

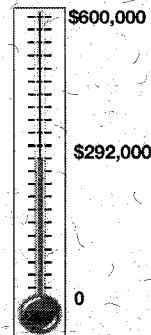
Starbucks - coffee for tabling events
Coronado Island Realty - Savin
office photo copier
Escondido Disposal, roll-off body
for cleanup day
Escondido Sand and Gravel,
cement recycling

Interpretive Center Capital Campaign

The Campaign to build an Inter-
pretive Center at
Elfin Forest
Recreational
Reserve has near-
ly reached the
halfway point
toward its goal of
\$600,000 by Dec.
15, 2006.

Reaching this goal
will allow the con-
struction of a won-
derful, functional
and aesthetic facili-
ty to serve the educational, youth
and community safety needs of the
community.

Please contribute what you can



to help build this legacy for Elfin
Forest. Every gift counts.

Office staff would be happy to dis-
cuss naming and planned gift oppor-
tunities with you in confidence.

\$50,000 - Anonymous
50,000 - Anonymous
50,000 - The Orca Fund at The
San Diego Foundation
2,500 - The Deborah Szekely
Family Foundation
1,500 - Timothy & Claudia
Costanzo
1,000 - Martha Blane &
Leonard Wittwer
1,000 - Cheri Smith
125 - Camille Armstrong
& Geoffrey Smith
100 - Jacqueline Arsivaud /
Benjamin & Alan Benjamin
100 - Gordon Caras, PhD
100 - Anthony De Bellis, Jr
& Melanie Fallon
50 - Gail Hanna
50 - The Doughty &
Stafford Family
25 - Richard &
Elizabeth Mercurio
25 - Brad Roth
25 - Frederick & Linda Woods

What is the HARRF?

The 'HARRF' - a fancy name
for the city of Escondido's
sewage treatment facility - is
located at the downhill end of
the valley, on Hale Avenue
(remember: Sewage flows
downhill.). The HARRF is an
activated sludge, secondary
treatment facility. This consists
of physical, biological, and
chemical treatment methods,
that include screening, sedi-
mentation, chemical precipita-
tion and biological processes. It
is designed to treat a flow of 18
million gallons per day (MGD).
The average daily flow is 15.6
MGD in dry weather.

After complex treatment, the
wastewater, called effluent, has

been treated to a high quality.
The effluent is discharged from
the HARRF to the Pacific
Ocean via a 14-mile-long land
outfall pipeline that connects to
an ocean outfall pipeline near
San Elijo Lagoon. The effluent
exits the outfall pipeline approx-
imately 1.5 miles offshore
through diffuser ports 110-feet
deep in the Pacific Ocean.

The city sends the organic
material, called biosolids, to
Yuma, Arizona, for beneficial
reuse as a soil amendment.
Additional tertiary treatment
capacity of about 18 MGD pro-
vides water for industrial reuse
and wet weather live stream
discharge under permit.

HARRF Continued from Page 1

allowed for these violations
would be \$17,087,490,000.
Yes, over \$17 billion! The city is
proposing to settle the matter
for \$690,000.

TECC believes these prob-
lems need to be rectified, yet
the proposed settlement does

not begin to touch the issue.

In testimony before the
Regional Board, TECC will con-
tinue to push for proactive
solutions to these significant
HARRF shortcomings that
jeopardize the health of Escon-
dido Creek.

Join Us as We Learn About the Escondido Creek Watershed

"Of what avail are forty freedoms without a blank spot on the map."

By Aldo Leopold in *A Sand County Almanac*

Outing Sign-Up Procedure:

Contact the outing leader at 760-471-9354 or information @escondidocreek.org to learn more about each week's trip and to sign up. Registration is required in case there is a change of plans and to manage trip size. All outings are led by our Executive Director, Geoffrey Smith, who is well-versed in the local land-use and resource management issues in the watershed. Meet 15 minutes prior to start time. Please, no dogs. Children are welcome on some trips when accompanied by parent or legal guardian.

Wednesdays in the Watershed Series

1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month, 9 a.m. – Noon:

Wednesday, Nov. 1: Bottle Peak

At 2195 feet, this landmark is the most prominent peak north and east of Escondido. Situated near Lake Wohlford Dam, this is a short but challenging hike. Meet at the Lake Wohlford Café, on Lake Wohlford Road, across from the park. Outing on private land with permission.

Wednesday, Nov. 15: NO OUTING

TECC Corps

Corps - A body of persons acting together or associated under common direction. *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition.*

Currently opportunities exist in the following areas:

Office - lots of things to improve efficient, or working with the public

Outdoors - outings, monitoring, surveying. Bring sunscreen!

Committee Support - acquisitions, Land Use, Water Quality, Fund-raising

Community Outreach - tabling at events and local merchants, Presentations

Special Projects - let's talk!

Grants - writing for dollars is a fun and often rewarding activity.

Hale Avenue Resource Recovery Facility

PHOTO CAPTION WITH PAGE 1 ARTICLE: The 18 million gallon per day (MGD) outfall pipe for the HARRF here crosses Escondido Creek on property owned by TECC in the Elfin Forest Preserve. The concrete 'A-jacks' shown in the center of the photo lock together and are designed to protect the submerged pipe from vehicles and debris coming down the creek.

Wednesday, Dec. 6: NO OUTING

Wednesday, Dec. 20: Derbas Property

This is a unique opportunity to explore the recently-acquired 345-acre Derbas property at the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve. TECC purchased this property in 2002, then 'flipped' it to the County of San Diego that manages it as open space in perpetuity. TECC is working with the county to remove invasive eucalyptus trees and establish a public trail system. Meet at the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve on Harmony Grove Road. Outing to closed area by permission.

Weekend Events:

Saturday, Nov. 4, 9 a.m. – Noon: Hike in Elfin Forest Recreation Reserve, TECC Property

TECC owns property immediately north and west of the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve. On this outing, we'll visit this special place, off-limits to the general public and see first-hand the threat presented by the neighboring 17-unit and 100-acre 'Cielo Azul' proposed development at the top of the 'Way Up Trail.' Maps will be provided. Meet at the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve staging area on Harmony Grove Road.

Special Events:

Saturday, Oct. 21: Stanley Peak Dedication

The city of Escondido has completed the purchase of the 105-acre Stanley Peak property for addition to Daley Ranch. The grand opening for Stanley Peak is Saturday, Oct. 21. Be there and receive a commemorative medallion. A shuttle from Daley Ranch parking lot on La Honda Drive will be available from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. A brief ceremony at the ranch house will be held at 9 a.m. Mayor Pfeiler will say a few words, followed by volunteer Jack Pomeroy. City staff and Park Docents will lead nature hikes to the peak starting at 9:30 a.m.

Visit the TECC web site for additional outings not listed on this page! www.escondidocreek.org.

BE PREPARED!

Here's a short checklist of gear to bring and wear on TECC outings:

Clothing:

Light weight shirt (nylon is best), light weight pants (nylon is best), hat, sturdy boots, windbreaker, jacket

Food:

2 quarts water, nuts, fruit, crackers, cheese

Other:

Cash, identification, day pack, extra clothes, extra food, first aid kit, whistle, sun screen, sun glasses, hiking staff

WATERSHED NEWS

The Del Dios Highlands Preserve (formerly known as the 'Derbas' property) has been the focus of recent attention by the County Parks and Recreation Dept, OMWD and TECC. Work will commence in October on trail engineering and eucalyptus tree removal. TECC is funding the work, with the good support of staff from the two agencies and the California Conservation Corps. We look forward to trails connectors to the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve, Harmony Grove and San Dieguito in the months ahead. Stay tuned... **State Senator Chris Kehoe's Conservation Easement Registry** legislation was signed by the Governor in October. "The registry will serve as an important planning tool that will help ensure a more coordinated allocation of our limited conservation dollars, help keep track of these easements for the future and provide the public with a better understanding of what they're getting for their money," said Senator Kehoe. Thank you, Senator Kehoe!... **The proposed Lennar Bridges Units 6&7 EIR** has been released. County DPLU staff has recommended denial of this project. On Aug. 25, the Planning Commission granted a 120-day continuance as requested by Lennar. This proposed development would substantially impact the core nesting area of the California Gnatcatcher bird, a federally listed threatened species. It is the view of TECC that there would be no way to mitigate the impact of 29 homes on 87 acres, and we are therefore strongly advocating for an acquisition alternative (no development). We'll keep you posted!... **The Harmony Grove Village draft EIR** has been released, and TECC has provided comments. TECC has concerns about the

significant housing density of 742 dwelling units on 468 acres, traffic impacts and sewage infrastructure, all of which would affect Escondido Creek. The proposed development is on the site of existing chicken ranches at County Club Drive and Harmony Grove Road... **The TECC Board of Directors wishes to express their appreciation** over the recent approval of TECC bylaw revisions and looks forward to the launch of the new

Membership Drive in January... **The TECC Traveling Road Show** is ready to come to your community! Contact the office to schedule an informative presentation by our Executive Director about the Escondido Creek Watershed and TECC's programs. Your Rotary, Kiwanis, school, church, town council or professional association will love what they see and hear! Call today: 760.471.9354.

THE ESCONDIDO CREEK CONSERVANCY

YES! I support TECC's efforts. Please send the *Watershed Voice* newsletter. Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation. I want to be a member at this level:

Basic Membership

- ☐ **\$15 Student**
☐ **\$50 Individual or Family**
Includes quarterly newsletter & TECC window sticker

I am interested in donating regularly.

Please send reminders
 ___ **Monthly** ___ **Quarterly**

Please make your check payable to 'The Escondido Creek Conservancy' **OR**

Friends of the Creek

- ☐ **\$100** *Includes basic premiums plus TECC baseball cap*
☐ **\$300** *Includes basic premiums plus Eagle Creek Day pack*
☐ **\$500** *Includes basic premiums plus invitation to Spring Celebration*

Protectors of the Creek

- ☐ **\$1,000** *These levels of membership include basic premiums, plus additional recognition as appropriate*
☐ **\$2,500**
☐ **\$5,000**
☐ **OTHER** _____

Please charge my credit card: ___ **One Time** ___ **Monthly** ___ **Quarterly**

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Credit Card No. _____

Exp. Date: _____ Security Code on back of card: _____

Authorized Signature: _____

Name on Card: _____

(Note: For your protection, your credit card number information in our files is destroyed after being processed.)

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email Address: _____

Name of Company that will match my gift: _____

☐ **BE A VOLUNTEER.**

Yes, I would like to volunteer to work with TECC. Please contact me with opportunities to serve.

Your Contributions are tax deductible.

You can support TECC with the click of a mouse! Click the 'DONATE NOW' symbol on the www.escondidocreek.org website for secure and efficient donations by credit card.

DONATE NOW

SECURE DONATIONS
BY CREDIT CARD



The visitor on the left, who represents a key constituency in the watershed, stops by our booth at Escondido's Grape Day on Sept. 9 to learn more about the Escondido Creek Conservancy.

The Escondido Creek Conservancy

P.O. Box 460791 Escondido California 92046

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Mission Statement

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

The Escondido Creek Conservancy Officers

June Rady.....	President	Jeff Swenerton.....	Director
Steve Barker.....	Vice President	Leonard Wittwer.....	Director
Brent Alspach.....	Secretary	TECC Office.....	760-471-9354
Tim Costanzo.....	Treasurer	Email.....	information@escondidocreek.org
Kevin Barnard.....	Director	Website.....	www.escondidocreek.org
Everett DeLano III.....	Director	Geoffrey D. Smith, MA.....	Executive Director
Jerry Harmon.....	Director	Mary Beth Francis.....	Watershed Voice Editor
Jack Olmstead.....	Director	Vickie Kleen.....	Bookkeeper

TECC Opens First Office in Watershed

In the month of July, TECC staff proudly occupied our new 'TECC World Headquarters' office! In the heart of Elfin Forest, on donated space at Anderson's Seed Co Nursery, this little office packs a big punch.

Located near TECC's current and prospective properties, the facility provides a central location for work, volunteering and managing supplies. A separate facility nearby provides secure storage for tools and equipment.

TECC Executive Director Geoffrey Smith looks forward to having lots of visitors! Please call before you come: 760.471.9354.

The location is north of Elfin Forest Road, just west of the Elfin Forest/ Harmony Grove Fire Station, at 20253 Elfin Forest Rd. Come on up and see us!



Above, Executive Director Geoffrey Smith at work in the new TECC office; to the right, a view of the new office, complete with landscaping and resident doggie, Lily.