Members Wanted  By June Rady, TECC Board President

This month marks the launch of TECC’s first-ever membership drive. We are very excited about the growth this will bring to the organization and the increase in watershed stewardship that will naturally occur in our region.

Without the support of members like you, The Escondido Creek Conservancy (TECC) would not be able to protect and preserve one of North County’s real treasures, the Escondido Creek watershed. For those of you who are not members, we need your help. We must expand our fund-raising efforts to ensure success. Our goal is to increase our membership from 80 to 300 by May of this year.

The threats to the watershed are many, and there is much to be done. Major developments in Escondido, Harmony Grove, Elfin Forest, and Rancho Santa Fe are being proposed.

Your support of our efforts is essential as we continue to address the habitat protection and watershed issues that are inevitable with this impending growth. Funding for land acquisition, restoration, and other important missions of TECC is solely supported by donations and grants. Your membership enables TECC to expand its efforts to:

- Acquire and preserve open space land in the watershed;
- Restore native habitat by planting hundreds of native plants and trees while eliminating invasive species;
- Monitor water quality along Escondido Creek to prevent pollution;
- Collaborate with conservation organizations, governmental agencies, and water districts in protecting and preserving the creek;
- Provide open space management for 90 acres in the Escondido Creek watershed. Agreements in process now will soon raise the total to more than 300 acres;
- Provide ongoing educational and recreational opportunities for the community.

I am pleased to report we have been remarkably successful since the Conservancy was founded in 1991. We are particularly proud that TECC has preserved more than 1,000 acres of open space in the watershed through direct purchase or by working in cooperation with the county of San Diego and local developers.

Designated open space, owned by TECC, the County, Olivenhain Municipal Water District (OMWD), and private developers now stretches from Del Dios Highway to the creek. Additional acreage contiguous to the creek is presently being negotiated for acquisition by TECC.

Throughout Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve and downstream, you can observe the large restoration project taking place that will reestablish the native vegetation of chaparral, oaks, and sycamores that were destroyed by the taller non-native eucalyptus trees (Eucalyptus camaldulensis) and invasive giant reed (Arundo donax), which blocked the sunlight. With the donation of native trees from local nurseries arranged by TECC and the work of OMWD and hundreds of volunteers, this promises to be one of the most beautiful areas in all of San Diego County.

Thanks to your generosity, TECC, in collaboration with OMWD, has raised more than $300,000 so far to construct an Interpretive Center at the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve. This will serve to build a greater understanding and appreciation of this precious ecosystem.

In achieving our successes, TECC acknowledges the vital and important relationships it has formed with the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council, the Endangered Habitats League, The Nature Conservancy, the Friends of Daley Ranch, the Olivenhain Municipal Water District, The Rancho Santa Fe Foundation, The San Diego Foundation, the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy, city and county governments, developers and our hundreds of dedicated volunteers.

Please don’t delay. Join The Escondido Creek Conservancy today. Your membership will have a positive impact on our watershed and will make a difference for future generations to come.
Can you remember your first membership? Maybe it was in Boy Scouts or Camp Fire or a little league team. Perhaps you joined the zoo, or became a member of a faith community.

For many of us, we were quite young when we had our first ‘joining’ experience. I vividly remember my first joining experience: I was 11 years old and demanded my parents take me down to the local scout house. I was met by the boys and leaders in the troop, and, with eyes big as the sky, I took my first scout oath. I carried my membership card with me for years — long after I became an adult. That membership meant a lot to me, and it still does.

Over the years, I have become a member of many organizations, and each has affected me in different ways. Do you remember the feeling you had when you first joined an organization that you believed in? I hope it was meaningful for you.

You have an opportunity to begin a new and lasting relationship with an organization you believe in. For the first time in its 15-year history, TECC is offering memberships.

That’s right, no longer are our supporters merely ‘donors;’ you are members! With all the rights, privileges and responsibilities afforded thereto. As a card-carrying member of TECC, many things will be as they always have been: you’ll receive newsletters and invitations to events; you’ll be asked to participate in important projects to acquire land or heal habitat; you may learn some new skills as you participate in TECC’s myriad programs. But one thing will be different. We hope that you will feel it in your heart. A sense of belonging. And with that sense of belonging, a duty of loyalty and duty of caring for the organization of which you are a member, just as your TECC Board members have had for 15 years.

Join today. Become a member of our growing family. I’ll be looking for your TECC Member sticker!

(Footnote: I would like to personally thank Board Member Jeff Swenerton, through whose tireless efforts our membership drive has taken shape, and the generous support of the Brian C. Malk and Nancy H. Heitlauf at the San Diego Foundation, which has provided needed financial support.)

I would love to hear from you. Contact me at information@escondidocreek.org or call 760.471.9354.

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The TECC Travelling Road Show is ready to come to your community! Contact the office to schedule an informative multi-media presentation by our Executive Director about the Escondido Creek Watershed and TECC’s exciting programs. Call today: 760.471.9354.

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...ABOUT PAGE 1 PHOTOS

To the left, Randy Smith, Tom French, and Sandi Jacobson conduct chemical water sampling on the creek at Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve. The three volunteers are members of Golden State Flycasters (GSF), a fishing club dedicated to the preservation of fisheries and fly fishing. The three were part of a group of 20 volunteers who received training from San Diego Coastkeeper in the sampling protocols. TECC is indeed fortunate to benefit from GSF’s adoption of Escondido Creek for their citizen monitoring work. Volunteers are needed! Contact the TECC office to learn how to participate.

To the right, several concerned citizens look over the site of the proposed Lennar Bridges Unit 7 development. Escondido Creek and the existing Bridges development are in the distance to the south of the project site. This project would construct about 30 custom homes on 80 acres in the heart of the core California gnatcatcher habitat, in the future MSCP-North (Multi-Species Conservation Plan). TECC, joined by the Endangered Habitats League and the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council among other groups, is opposing this project on several grounds, including placing the local gnatcatcher population in jeopardy. A final recommendation by the San Diego County Planning Commission on this project, originally scheduled for Jan. 26, has been delayed until after March 1.
Summary of Projects and Issues in the Watershed

The Lennar Homes Bridges Units 6 and 7 development proposals are still pending before the County Planning Commission. The Unit 7 project would construct about 30 houses on 80 acres of prime coastal sage scrub — the preferred habitat for the California gnatcatcher.

Based on this fact and other concerns such as emergency access and community character, TECC continues to oppose the project and maintains regular communication with the proponents. Future hearings will be after March 1.

The Harmony Grove Village proposal for 750 homes — on more than 400 acres currently occupied by egg ranches and dairy farms — was approved by the County County Board of Supervisors on Feb. 7. TECC continues to be opposed to the current project density and will address a variety of issues as the project continues to go before permitting agencies...

With the recent successful passage of Prop. 84, designating more than $5 billion in funds for acquisition and restoration statewide, a number of regional efforts are currently underway to identify and prioritize projects.

TECC is participating in: the Integrated Regional Watershed Management Plan (IRWMP) process and the San Diego Conservation Resources Network’s Land Acquisition Pipeline project (TECC’s Executive Director serves on the SDCRN ExCom). TECC’s proposals in these ranking processes include a number of collaborative land acquisition projects in the watershed...

TECC recently learned of a proposal to build a 1,200-unit development on 500 acres on Mt. Whitney, just above Questhaven Retreat in Elfin Forest. The project, named University Heights, poses a significant threat to rural community character and open space systems...

TECC is an active participant in discussions revolving around Rancho Guejito and the owner’s recent bid to file for annexation to the city of Escondido. This 20,000-plus-acre intact Mexican Rancho is a priceless open space jewel adjoining the upper headwaters of Escondido Creek....

TECC recently distributed 350 direct mail pieces to every home in Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove, with information concerning managing invasive plants and landscaping with natives. The mailing was made possible by a grant from the Elfin Forest Community Foundation....

The Interpretive Center Capital Campaign has reached the $300,000 point, and a citizen design review advisory committee is being formed to review design proposals to be submitted in response to an RFP. Occupancy of the center is planned for mid-2009. We can’t wait!
Join Us as We Learn About the Escondido Creek Watershed

"I only went out for a walk and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in." - John Muir

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 signup. Registration is required in case there is a chance 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
Mid-week half-day hikes to special places in the watershed. If your work or school (or retirement!) allows, this is a great way to break up your week and avoid the weekend crowds. (1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month), 9 am – 12 noon.

Feb. 21, 9 am – noon: San Elijo Lagoon, South Shore Hike
Where does our water go? Why, San Elijo Lagoon of course! We'll see how this nearly 1,000-acre coastal wetland manages the water it receives from Escondido Creek. Meet at the Rios Ave trailhead: I-5 to Lomas Santa Fe exit; Drive west on Lomas Santa Fe Drive; Turn right on Rios Avenue; Drive to end of Rios Ave and park along the curb. Easy, 4 miles, flat. Call 760.471.9354 or information@escondidocreek.org to signup.

March 7, 9 am – noon: Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve - Lake Hodges Overlook Hike
Hike up the Way Up Trail and Lake Hodges Overlook loop, overlooking Del Dios, Lake Hodges, and East County. Meet at staging area at EFRR. Intermediate, 6 miles, 700' gain/loss. Call 760.471.9354 or information@escondidocreek.org to signup.

March 21, 9 am – noon: Stanley Peak Hike
A brisk hike up to the recently dedicated Stanley Peak addition to Daley Ranch. Enjoy spectacular 360-degree views of the upper watershed. We'll hike the Sage Trail along the eastern perimeter of Daley Ranch, checking out Bear Valley to the east, including two important acquisition priorities. Meet at the upper end of La Honda. This is a joint Sierra Club 'Wednesdays in the Mountains' outing. Intermediate, 7 miles, 1,000 feet gain/loss. Call 760.471.9354 or information@escondidocreek.org to signup.

The Months Ahead:
For information on future WIW Outings, please contact the TECC office: information @ escondidocreek.org or 760.471.9354.

Weekend Events
April 14, Saturday: Sixth Annual Earth Day Service Project in the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve, 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
We'll have something for everyone; spreading mulch, plantings and a creek cleanup. Meet at the parking lot staging area, ready to get dirty! Drinks and snacks provided by our corporate sponsor, Adventure 16. Participants should wear pants and long sleeve shirts. RSVP to Olivenhain Municipal Water District: (760) 632-4212 or efrfriends@olivenhain.com.

April 21, Saturday: Elfin Forest Garden Festival
The unincorporated, rural community of Elfin Forest is home to many unique gardens. This festival celebrates the genius of their designers and the diversity of options available to rural gardeners. Here you'll be inspired by the many possibilities of gardening on a grand scale and you'll take home plants and garden-related merchandise to remind you of your garden adventure. Proceeds benefit the fire wise demonstration garden, Elfin Forest Fire Department, The Escondido Creek Conservancy and other community organizations. More info at www.elfinfostartedgardens.info

May 5, Saturday: Membership Recognition Spring Celebration Event (Rain date: May 6)
Spend the day in spring-time splendor as we celebrate the season and our membership in TECC. Lunch and guided interpretive walks at the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve are planned. Don't miss it! Save the date - Details coming! Continued on Page 5

Be Prepared! Here’s a short checklist of gear to bring and wear:

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

This 2003 BMW X5 SUV Could Be Yours!
64K mi/100K mi. warranty. 3.0 liter. Class 3 hitch. Gray-Green color. Leather interior.

Through the generosity of the Claudia and Tim Costanzo family, this beautiful vehicle has been donated to TECC to be auctioned to the highest bidder. Proceeds will benefit the Interpretive Center campaign. Get complete specifications and make your bid today by visiting the TECC web site, or calling the office. The current highest bid is posted on the web site, starting at $20,000. Bidding will close April 20, at 5 p.m. exactly. Remember, TECC is a 501(c)(3) tax-deductible charity, so be enthusiastic in your offers!
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

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

☐ I wish my name and contribution amount to remain anonymous.

I am interested in donating regularly. Please send reminders
☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly

Please make your check payable to ‘The Escondido Creek Conservancy’ OR

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

TECC Honor Roll

The Escondido Creek Conservancy gratefully acknowledges the following donors for their generosity during the past 3 months.

TECC endeavors to recognize all donors. If we inadvertently left your name off of this list, please don’t hesitate to contact the office. We’ll make it right in the next issue!

Members
Steve Ahles
Paul Bergford
Karen Byars
Melanie Fallon and Anthony DeBellis
Betsy Gilpin
Thomas and Donna Golich
David Harlow
Joy and David Jackson
Thomas and Margaret Knothe
Tom Leech
Mariposa Tree Service
Gloria Murphy
Rick and Heidi Paul
James and Charlotte Smith
Elaine Dodge and Martin A. Steabus
Jeff and Carolyn Swenerton
Ricky Schlesinger
HeLEN S. Simmons
Phyllis Strickland
Bill Tippets
Frank and Gail Twohy
Kirbie and Stacie Wolfe

Friends of the Creek ($100 +)
Steve and Nora Barker
Bonita and Kenneth Baumgartner
Harry and Stacy Ehlich
Habitat West, Inc.
Ed and Janice Hall
Chris and Linda Khoury
Rick Landavazo
Suzann & William Leininger
Kim MacConnel
Olivemiam Municipal Water District
Margaret and William Robison
Ali Shapouri
Leo and Wilma Wittwer
Martha Blane and Leonard Wittwer

Protectors of the Creek ($1,000 +)
Janene Colby -- $5,000
Karen Gardner and John Phillips -- $1,000

In-Kind
Tim and Claudia Costanzo - File cabinet
Eagle Creek - Day packs for donor premiums
Andrew and Tanya Malt - 1995 Volkswagen Jetta
Jack Olmstead - Wheelbarrow, document shredder
San Diego Archaelogical Society - File cabinet
San Diego Futures Foundation - Desktop computer

Grants
The Jack and Jill Campbell Fund at the San Diego Foundation -- $250 for operations
The Brian C. Malt and Nancy Heitel Fund at the San Diego Foundation -- $7,000 to support the membership campaign

Interpretive Center Capital Campaign
Tim and Claudia Costanzo - BMW SUV, in-kind gift for auction
Harry and Stacy Ehlich -- $1,000
Mark and Kathy Fackler -- $1,000
Helen Thomson Fund at the Rancho Santa Fe Foundation -- $1,500

Outings Continued from Page 4
Aug. 25, Saturday: 6th Annual ‘Concert on the Creek’ Featuring Berkeley Hart
This year the concert returns to the Lazy J Ranch in Elin Forest. Plan now to attend this extraordinary event. Save the date - Details coming!
Mission Statement

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 for the benefit of all residents of the area.

The Escondido Creek Conservancy Officers

June Rady..................................................President
Steve Barker..............................................V. President
Brent Alspach..............................................Secretary
Tim Costanzo..............................................Treasurer
Kevin Barnard...........................................Director
Everett DeLano III.................................Director
Jerry Harmon.............................................Director
Jack Olmstead..........................................Director

Jeff Swenerton...........................................Director
Leonard Wittwer........................................Director
TECC Office...........................................760-471-9354
Email........................................information@escondidocreek.org
Website........................................www.escondidocreek.org
Geoffrey D. Smith, MA..................Executive Director
Mary Beth Francis................Watershed Voice Editor
Vickie Kleen.................................Bookkeeper

TECC Corps: Volunteer Opportunities

We have a saying here at TECC: "You can't pay our volunteers to do what they do." They wouldn't take the money! TECC Corps members give freely of their time because it is important to them to support TECC's mission.

They know that giving freely for a cause you believe in is the best compensation a person could want.

You are invited to participate in any way you can. It all adds up to a healthy watershed and a thriving community.

TECC welcomes college internships!

Contact the TECC Office for more information on any of these opportunities or call 760.471.9354.

Office - Membership database support; Preparing weekly response mailings to donors and members; office clerical support; filing, phones, outreach; support of property database; create an information file of non-government organizations

Outdoors - Citizen monitoring of the creek; property monitoring; conducting or coordinating interpretive outings

Committee Support - Service on any of our program committees is a great way to get involved!

Each of these committees is chaired by a TECC Board member and meets regularly on a monthly or bi-monthly basis:

Acquisitions & Management; Land Use; Membership, Outreach and Education (MOE); Water Quality; Fund-raising Development

Community Outreach -- Tabling at events and local merchants; slide shows; door-to-door canvassing

Special Projects -- Research Scenic Byway designation; Creek signage program in the city of Escondido and county of San Diego; Interpretive Center project support: architectural, interpretive design, construction; develop manuals for board, volunteers, and procedures

Grants -- Research and support grant application processing, working with the Executive Director