



# friend to friend



FROM TRESTLES TO SADDLEBACK—PROTECT OUR COMMUNITY—STOP THE TOLL ROAD SOUTH

A Project of Sierra Club

APRIL/MAY 2006

## TCA approves foothill-south toll road attorney general files lawsuit

**O**n February 23rd, Orange County's toll road agency, the Transportation Corridor Agency (TCA) voted 12-3 to certify their environmental report on the Foothill-South Toll Road and officially selected the alignment that bisects both San Onofre State Beach and the Donna O'Neill Land Conservancy. **While disappointing, the vote was not surprising. The TCA is a single-purpose, locally-entrenched Orange County bureaucracy, so of course they would approve their own project.**

Councilman Larry Agran was the hero of the day, initiating discussion among the board members prior to the vote. **Councilman Agran made excellent points about the need to improve existing infrastructure and promote forward-thinking transportation solutions, as opposed to the outdated Foothill-South Toll Road proposal.**

**Dana Point Mayor Lara Anderson and Santa Ana Mayor pro tem Lisa Bist also refused to support a toll road alignment through San Onofre State Beach and the Donna O'Neill Land Conservancy.** They agreed on the need to look for transportation solutions that don't involve sacrificing protected parklands.

### GOVERNOR SCHWARZENEGGER WEIGHS IN

As TCA board members considered their decision, the Schwarzenegger Administration issued a statement about the proposed route. In the joint statement by Mike Chrisman, Secretary for Resources and Sunne Wright McPeak, Secretary for Business, Transportation and Housing, the governor's office criticized the toll road agency for backing the route through state parkland. They promised to continue to work with the agency "to explore all viable alternatives should there be an opportunity to reconsider the alignment."

**"We understand the desperate need to reduce traffic congestion in this area, but we are equally concerned about losing valuable state park land that is beloved by so many California residents,"** McPeak and Chrisman said.

### NEXT STEPS - LITIGATION AND EDUCATION

TCA's February decision kicks off the next phase of our campaign, including litigation, as we continue to educate decision-makers

*cont'd on next page*

## victory at the state parks commission

**O**n November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2005 over 1,000 people attended the California Parks and Recreation Commission Hearing in San Clemente and asked Commissioners to protect San Onofre State Beach, the San Mateo Campground, and Trestles Beach from the proposed Foothill-South Toll Road. **If you were one of those 1,000 people who turned out to tell the State Parks Commission to protect San Onofre State Beach we thank you!**

As a result of the overwhelming support Commissioners heard from meeting attendees, the Commission unanimously passed a resolution asking Governor Schwarzenegger and California's Attorney General to oppose the proposed Foothill-South Toll Road extension through San Onofre State Beach:

*"Further resolved that the Commission respectfully requests that the Governor, in concert with the Attorney General's office, oppose any major transportation*

*cont'd on next page*

## starr ranch annual BBQ

**sunday, april 23rd**

**1-5 P.M.**

GET YOUR TICKETS NOW

*See inside flyer for details.*



# volunteer profile: jerry collamer



BY STEVE NETHERBY

“Save Trestles. Stop the Toll Road.” You’ve seen the sticker on bumpers and back windows. It’s a battle cry, badge of kinship in a cause—branding the effort to ban the south extension of the 241 toll road. Brainchild of Jerry Collamer, “**The Trestles Guy.**”

The nickname caught up to the ex-TV-commercial director at dinner out with wife Carol when three surfers walked by their table. One spotted Collamer and said, “**Hey! It’s Trestles guy!**” They recognized Collamer as the tireless Friends of the Foothills activist-surfer who sets up card tables and banners at Trestles access points to warn ocean lovers of dangers the proposed road poses to the “Yosemite of Surfing.”

Collamer brings superb communication skills to the campaign, fueled by a passion for the place and a global perspective. He’s surfed Trestles since he was 13; surfed Indonesia, Australia, Mexico, Bali, Fiji, and the East Coast. He’s experienced the efficiencies of mass transit in New York, London, and Paris and wishes we were as evolved in Southern California.

He calls his Friends of the Foothills colleagues “**the most honest, caring people I’ve ever met.**” Asked if we can halt the toll road, he fires back: “**Absolutely!**”

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about the destructive Foothill-South Toll Road.

**On March 23rd, our coalition and Attorney General Bill Lockyer (on behalf of the people of California, the Parks Commission, and the Native American Heritage Commission) filed suit against the Foothill-Eastern Transportation Corridor Agency (TCA).** The attorney general called the TCA’s plan to push the toll road through the state park and conservancy “**arrogant and disgraceful.**”

The environmental groups that filed suit include the Sierra Club, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the California State Parks Foundation, Sea and Sage Audubon, Endangered Habitats League, Surfrider Foundation, and Laguna Greenbelt.

**In addition to litigation, the TCA still faces several major hurdles, including the California Coastal Commission, before they can get the approvals and permits they need to build the road.**

The Friends of the Foothills campaign will be there every step of the way continuing our efforts to educate state level decision-makers about the need to defend our state park system and pursue politically sound feasible alternatives to alleviate traffic problems in Southern California.

## it's not too late!

### help us stop the foothill-south toll road!

For more information about how you can help fund the lawsuit and help the Sierra Club and the Friends of the Foothills Coalition protect San Onofre State Beach from the Foothill-South Toll Road, contact Brittany McKee at 949/361-7534 or [Brittany.mckee@sierraclub.org](mailto:Brittany.mckee@sierraclub.org)

*cont’d from page 1* The state parks commission “NO” vote—an important victory

*arterial through San Onofre State Beach using all appropriate methods, including litigation if necessary, to defend this valuable and irreplaceable public resource.”*

You can read the full text of the State Parks Commission resolution on our website at [www.friendsofthefoothills.org](http://www.friendsofthefoothills.org).

As a result of the State Parks Commission’s actions, the Attorney General filed a lawsuit on March 23rd, 2006 to protect San Onofre State Beach.

**This is a great victory and would not have happened without all your hard work, letters, phone calls and those of you who turned out to the Parks Commission hearing in San Clemente.**

The Parks Commission victory has been followed in recent months by SIX southern California cities passing resolutions or sending letters in support of protection of San Onofre State Beach from the proposed Foothill-South Toll Road extension.



Aliso Viejo Councilmember  
Karl Warkomski

The cities of Aliso Viejo, Del Mar, Imperial Beach, Laguna Beach, Los Angeles, and Oceanside have all expressed their deep concern about the proposal to extend multiple lanes of pavement through the middle of California’s 5<sup>th</sup> most popular state park.

**“The positions taken by these cities reflect a sentiment shared by Californians up and down the state,”** said Aliso Viejo Councilman Karl Warkomski. **“As elected officials, we recognize the value of parkland for our constituents, working families, schoolchildren, and California visitors.”**

AS THE TOLL ROAD AGENCY ATTEMPTS TO GET THE PERMITS THEY NEED TO CONSTRUCT THE FOOTHILL-SOUTH TOLL ROAD, ONE OF THE BIGGEST HURDLES THEY FACE IS WITH THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION. WE SAT DOWN WITH SIERRA CLUB COASTAL PROGRAMS DIRECTOR, MARK MASSARA TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION.



## an interview with mark massara



Mark Massara—Director of Sierra Club's Coastal Programs

### what is the california coastal commission?

The California Coastal Commission was established by the California Coastal Act of 1976, which in turn was established by a voter initiative enacted to protect California's 1,100-mile coast.

The Coastal Commission is comprised of 12 voting members, 4 each appointed by the Governor, Senate Rules Committee and Assembly Speaker, creating a balance that is unique among state agencies.

The Commission meets monthly in different coastal locations and deliberates hundreds of development proposals from throughout California's coastal zone.

**The Commission's proceedings are open to the public and public participation is encouraged and is to be maximized according to the law.** The public is also encouraged to work closely with Coastal Commission staff, who prepare written analysis of the various proposed development projects which the Commission reviews.

**More information about the Coastal Act, the Commissioners, staff, staff reports and upcoming meeting agendas can be found on the Commission's website at [www.coastal.ca.gov](http://www.coastal.ca.gov).**

### what role does the commission play in the fight to protect san onofre state beach from the foothill-south toll road?

Since the Foothill-South Toll Road would have permanent, catastrophic impacts upon the coast, the project must be reviewed by the Coastal Commission pursuant to both the Commission's normal coastal development permit (CDP) process as well as its federal consistency (CD) determination process because federal decision-making and financing is involved. Notable is the fact that toll road advocates have argued that the Commission is entitled only to a federal CD process for the project. That is because they expect (as we all do) that the Coastal Commission will deny the toll road project based upon its permanent, catastrophic impacts on the coast and the numerous, readily available less environmentally damaging alternatives that could be used in lieu of the toll road to relieve traffic and ease highway commuting. Toll road proponents hope for just a CD process because they expect the Bush Administration to support their efforts to reject, ignore and overrule the Coastal Commission's determination that the project is inconsistent with the State of California Coastal Zone Management Program (CZMP), a tactic available to the federal government in CD evaluation and not for a CDP.

### what can we do to help?

The time to work with the Coastal Commission and their staff on the toll road project is NOW. Write a letter to Meg Caldwell, Chair of the Coastal Commission. Tell Chairman Caldwell and the Commission that the proposed Foothill South Toll Road violates the Coastal Act, will harm wetlands, destroy a popular campground and pollute the surf at Trestles Beach. You can send your letter to: **Coastal Commission Chair Meg Caldwell—California Coastal Commission, 45 Fremont Street, Suite 2000, San Francisco, CA 94105-2219**

# hikes



Ever wonder what great open spaces and wonderful vistas lie beyond the fences and parking lots of South Orange County? Here's your chance to find out. Let experienced Sierra Club hike leaders show you some of Southern California's most beautiful places. Join Sierra Club and Friends of the Foothills on these fun, informational and easy walks.

South Orange County (SOC) hikes rideshare meeting point: Ortega Business Center parking lot, Southeast corner, at the intersection of Ortega Highway and Rancho Viejo Road in San Juan Capistrano.

Important information for all hikes:  
Always bring water; sturdy, comfortable shoes; hat. Wear sunscreen.  
Rain cancels.



## Saturday, April 29

SIERRA SAGE/FRIENDS OF THE FOOTHILLS

### san clemente ridgeline

Enjoy this ridgeline walk with panoramic views of the San Clemente back country and Dana Point on a clear day. The trail is hilly and mostly paved. Meet at 8:30am at the end of Calle Cordillera in the San Clemente Business Park. From I-5, go 1 mile East on Ave. Pico and turn Right on Calle Amanecer. Turn Right on Calle Cordillera to the end. **6 mile route. 200' gain.** *Bring water, hat, and sunscreen. Rain cancels.*

## Saturday, May 20

SIERRA SAGE/FRIENDS OF THE FOOTHILLS

### trestles beach

Fun at the beach! Join us for this walk to the famous surfing beach at Trestles and the extensive wetlands area through which the San Mateo Creek flows. We will discuss the ecological importance of the surrounding area and point out the alignment and damage that the Foothill-South Toll Road would bring to this state park. Meet at 8:30 am at the Trestles Parking Lot (take Cristianitos off-ramp from I-5 at the South end of San Clemente, go Left one block, Left at the stop and Right into the lot). *Bring water, sunscreen and hat. 3 mile route. Rain cancels.*

## Saturday, June 10

SIERRA SAGE/FRIENDS OF THE FOOTHILLS

### donna o'neill land conservancy

Experience the beautiful scenery and spring wild flowers on this slow paced nearly level 1.5 mile walk. We will point out the proposed toll road route through the Conservancy and explain the need to preserve this ecological hot spot. Meet at 8:30 am at the South Orange County rideshare meeting point. *Bring water, sunscreen and hat. Donation of \$5/adult to support the work of the Conservancy is appreciated. Rain cancels.*

## Saturday, July 8

SIERRA SAGE/FRIENDS OF THE FOOTHILLS

### trestles beach

Summer fun at the beach, escape the heat and enjoy this morning walk down to the famous surfing beach at Trestles. Look for birds at the San Mateo Lagoon and surfers at Uppers. We will discuss the ecological importance of the surrounding area and point out the alignment and damage that the Foothill-South Toll Road would bring to this state park. Meet at 8:30 am at the Trestles Parking Lot (take Cristianitos off-ramp from I-5 at the South end of San Clemente, go Left one block, Left at the stop and Right into the lot). *Bring water, sunscreen and hat. 3 mile route. Rain cancels.*



**SIERRA SAGE  
ANNUAL SPRING FUNDRAISER**

# STARR RANCH BBQ

**sunday  
april 23rd  
1-5 P.M.**

- **Old Fashioned BBQ**
- **Country/Bluegrass Entertainment**
- **Guided Hikes**
- **Bird Walks**
- **Wildflower Walks**



## **Join us for a BBQ with family and friends in the magnificent outdoor setting of the Audubon Starr Ranch Wilderness Wildlife Sanctuary**

Enjoy a beautiful wild area close to home that the public rarely gets to see—the magnificent 4,000-acre Audubon Starr Ranch in southeast Orange County. We will celebrate with a mouthwatering old fashioned BBQ and Country/Bluegrass entertainment by Chuck Buck's Saddle Mountain Band. There will be plenty of activities including guided hikes and bird and wildflower walks. Wine and beer (small additional charge) and vegetarian burgers will also be available.

Please attend and help protect open space in Orange County. Proceeds will benefit the Starr Ranch Wilderness Wildlife Sanctuary and Sierra Club's campaign to protect Orange County's open space and parklands.

Tickets must be purchased in advance—reservations will not be taken by phone.

If significant rain occurs on April 23rd, the BBQ will be postponed on week to April 30th. Ticket cost: adults-\$25 each, children under 12 years-\$12.50 each. *If you would like to volunteer at the event for a half price admission, please contact Mike at 949-768-3610.*

*For more information call Mike or Patty Sappingfield at 949-768-3610. For tickets and a map, send your checks payable to "Sierra Sage" and include a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: M. Griffith, 3238 Paseo Gallita, San Clemente, CA 92672.*



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FOUNDED 1892



