

did you know?

THE TOLL ROADS HAVE COST TAXPAYERS MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN MAINTENANCE FEES FOR FAULTY FILTERS AND RESURFACING OF DANGEROUS ROADS.

“Caltrans estimates it will cost at least \$13.3 million to repair or replace 38 storm drain filters along the San Joaquin Hills toll road that the agency has conceded are faulty and should never have been installed in the first place...”

The state spent \$2 million to repave 10 miles of the San Joaquin Hills tollway after a rash of rain-related incidents resulting in 13 injuries and one death.”

[“Cost of Fixing Tollway Drains is \$13.3 Million,” Los Angeles Times; Deadly Roadway Would Be Improved to Tune of \$250,000” Los Angeles Times]



IF THE FOOTHILL-SOUTH TOLL ROAD IS BUILT THROUGH SAN ONOFRE STATE BEACH, THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION HAS SAID IT WILL ABANDON SAN MATEO CAMPGROUND.

“Although TCA [Transportation Corridor Agencies] is presumably aware of the mitigation report prepared by the Parks Department, the DEIS/R [Foothill-South Draft Environmental Impact Statement] omits any discussion of the likelihood that the Campground would be abandoned in the event an FEC [Far East Corridor] Alternative is built.”

[Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP comments on April 2004 Foothill/Eastern TCA and Federal Highway Administration Joint Draft Environmental Impact Report for the South Orange County Infrastructure Improvement Project (SOCTIIP) and the Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit Application before the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.]

www.friendsofthefoothills.org

San Clemente, California 92674

P.O. Box 3942

FOUNDED 1992
SIERRA CLUB



A Project of Sierra Club

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

friends
OF THE
foothills



Look inside... "smart growth" can help save our open space!

U.S. Postage
Non-Profit
PAID
Mission Viejo, CA
Permit No. 814



upcoming "smart growth" community briefing

BY BRITTANY MCKEE

Say the words "Orange County" and most people think of freeways, suburbs, and more suburbs. But for those who look past the stereotypes and sound barriers, Orange County still has beautiful significant natural areas. Unfortunately, if the Rancho Mission Viejo development goes through as proposed (14,000 houses and over 5 million square feet of commercial space), it will ruin our opportunity to protect the crown jewel of Orange County's last big unprotected open space.

But what if it didn't have to be that way? What if there were a better way – an improved plan that would provide increased housing for Orange County, but still leave a magnificent natural legacy, clean water, and clean air for our children?

That is the concept behind "smart growth" – encouraging new growth in and around existing communities and avoiding sprawling developments that swallow up our remaining natural areas. By designing a development pattern that will use the land efficiently, we can create vibrant urban and suburban neighborhoods, reduce traffic, increase open space, and have cleaner air and water for everyone to enjoy.

Sound like a better idea? We think so too.

That's why we've invited Bill Fulton, one of the nation's leading experts on urban planning, metropolitan growth, and economic development, to talk to us about smart growth and show us better ways to plan for the future of Orange County.

Please join us for a community briefing on smart growth on Wednesday, April 27th at 7pm at the DoubleTree Hotel in Dana Point. In addition to Bill Fulton, local activists will be presenting their own smart growth plan - The Wild Heritage Plan - as an alternative to the Rancho Mission Viejo development proposal.

SMART GROWTH COMMUNITY BRIEFING:

who:

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER
BILL FULTON-**

journalist, urban planner, researcher, best-selling author, and Ventura City Councilmember.

when:

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2005
7:00 P.M.**

where:

**DOHENY BEACH
DOUBLETREE GUEST SUITES**

34402 Pacific Coast Highway
Dana Point, CA 92629

(Pacific Coast Highway exit from I-5)

For more information or to RSVP, contact Brittany McKee at 949-361-7534 or at brittany.mckee@sierraclub.org.

It's not too late to protect the last natural areas of Orange County! Please attend this informative briefing and find out how you can help.

sierra club joins lawsuit over rancho mission viejo development proposal

BY GAIL PROTHERO

The Sierra Club has joined an environmental lawsuit challenging the November 8, 2004 decision of the Orange County Board of Supervisors to approve the application of Rancho Mission Viejo for a massive development. The development proposal calls for approximately 14,000 residential units and 5 million square feet of commercial space in the largest area of privately owned open space left in Orange County. Scientists have called the area a "globally significant hotspot of biological diversity." The proposed roads and development crisscross large

expanses of intact open space, fragment important habitat into patches that will not adequately protect wildlife and pollute the only remaining free flowing watershed in California, south of Ventura County. State and federal agencies had initiated a planning process under the Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program, designed to preserve and protect the most important habitat on the site. However, the Board of Supervisors approved the development before the NCCP planning

cont'd on next page

process was completed, effectively eliminating the agencies' ability to successfully complete the NCCP process.

Please consider making a gift in the amount of \$25, \$50, or \$100 today to support our efforts to protect this special area. Sustaining contributors can provide additional support by pledging \$25 to \$50 per month to this effort in 2005. Please make your check payable to "Sierra Club Foundation" and note "Friends of the

Foothills" in the check memo. Contributions should be mailed to Friends of the Foothills/Sierra Club, Attn: Brittany McKee, P.O. Box 3942, San Clemente, CA 92674. *For more information, or to make a pledge, please contact Brittany McKee, FOF coordinator, (949)361-7534, Brittany.mckee@sierraclub.org, or Gail Prothero, FOF Finance Chair, (949)347-1255, gprothero@cox.net.*



spring into some fun fundraisers!

Adults \$25, Children under 12 years old \$12.50. *For tickets and a map, send check payable to "Sierra Sage" and include a self-addressed, stamped envelope to reservationist M. Griffith, 3238 Paseo Gallita, San Clemente, CA 92672. Call Mike or Patty Sappingfield at 949-768-3610 for more information or for last minute inquiries.*

SAT-SUN, MAY 7-8 - CLEVELAND NATIONAL FOREST CAR CAMP AND HIKING

Join us for an overnight fundraising car camp adventure in the Cleveland National Forest. On Saturday we'll pitch tents, go for guided hikes, and return to camp for a gourmet happy hour, barbeque, campfire, guitar music, and stargazing. The Eta Aquarid meteors will be flying this week in the wee hours before dawn. Proceeds will benefit the campaign to save Rancho Mission Viejo. *Please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope, phone, e-mail, and check payable to "Sierra Sage" for \$25 for one or \$50 for a family to reservationist Gail Prothero, 29302 Sandalwood Court, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675. Directions to the campground and a checklist of things to bring will be mailed to participants. Contact Gail Prothero at (949)347-1255, or e-mail gprothero@cox.net for information.*

JULY 23-24 (SAT-SUN) CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK & MARINE SANCTUARY CRUISE - WILDLIFE & WATERSPORTS.

July is the perfect time to enjoy wildlife, hike, swim, snorkel, and kayak all on the same weekend. The islands will be alive with curious sea lions, seals, as well as dolphins and numerous species of birds. Snorkelers will delight in the pristine waters of the marine sanctuary surrounding these islands, and photographers will especially enjoy the "magic hours." The cruise departs on the 65' twin diesel Truth from Santa Barbara. Guests are encouraged to board the boat on Friday evening, July 22, to prepare for an early Saturday departure. The cruise is informal. Each guest will have an assigned bunk equipped with a privacy curtain and a reading light. The cost, \$350, includes bunk, sumptuous meals, snacks, & guide. *To reserve space send a check for \$100, payable to "Sierra Club" (be sure to write Friends of the Foothills in the check memo), to leaders Joan Jones Holtz & Don Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. For more information call Joan or Don at (626-443-0706) or email jholtzhln@aol.com; or call Gail Prothero at (949)347-1255 or e-mail gprothero@cox.net.*

Spring is here, and it's the perfect time to get out and enjoy the beautiful natural areas that make Orange County such a great place to live (and visit!). Below are some fun and exciting upcoming opportunities to enjoy the environment and help to raise money and awareness for our campaign to protect Orange County's natural areas and keep our creeks and surf clean!

SUNDAY, APRIL 17TH - 2PM - STARR RANCH BARBEQUE FUNDRAISER

Experience the beautiful Starr Ranch Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary and celebrate Earth Day with an old-fashioned barbeque with Country/Bluegrass entertainment by Chuck Buck's Saddle Mountain Band, as well as guided hikes and bird and wildflower walks. Proceeds will benefit the Starr Ranch Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary and the Sierra Club's campaign to preserve the remaining natural areas in Orange County. If significant rain occurs on April 17th, the barbeque will be postponed one week to April 24.

volunteer profile: jack eidt

BY JERRY COLLAMER



Jack Eidt is an urban planner by degree, novelist by choice and wild lands preservationist at heart. His childhood home is San Juan Capistrano, whose once vast wilderness of undeveloped rancho was Jack's boyhood playground.

Fast forward to college and a career in urban planning. Jack graduated from UC Santa Barbara's Environmental Studies Program and received his Master's of Urban and Regional Planning from UCLA. **Jack's thought: what better way to preserve open space than to learn how to plan smart for inevitable encroaching development.**

Jack rose through the urban planning ranks extending his portfolio of smart planning deep into Central America. He has worked for three planning consultants in Orange County and Los Angeles and in recent years he has lived and worked in Central America and the Caribbean.

Now, having completed his second novel, Jack's back home in South Orange County advocating for what else - smart growth. Utilizing the New Urbanist Model, Jack along with a dedicated crew of South Orange County environmentalists recently formed Wild Heritage Planners (WHP). WHP is a green coalition dedicated to saving what's still wild and beautiful here - particularly the mighty San Mateo watershed, its creeks and tributaries, the last of its perfectly wild kind anywhere in Southern California.

Welcome back, Jack.

local activists deliver a better plan to the rancho mission viejo company...

BY JACK EIDT, PAUL CARLTON AND JERRY COLLAMER

WILD HERITAGE PLAN PROPOSAL – AN OPPORTUNITY

Rancho Mission Viejo is a wild gem of almost 23,000 acres, a place that still reflects the heritage of the California Mission era. Cattle intermingle with wildlife, hundreds of endangered California gnatcatchers flit through the sage-scrub hillsides, and the spirits of the Acjachemen or Juaneño Indians can be felt in the air. Rancho Mission Viejo's proposal to build a new city of 35,000 residents bisected by the Foothill South Toll Road extension (SR 241) could seal the fate of these last remaining undeveloped foothills, and change forever the quality of life for South Orange County residents.

WE CAN HAVE HOUSING AND SAVE HABITAT

Enough land exists in Rancho Mission Viejo to build a significant amount of new housing and preserve wilderness. The present development proposal would sprawl over hillsides, fragment existing wilderness habitat at Chiquita Ridge and dump pollutants into the pristine San Mateo Creek. **We advocate a plan that focuses the development into four interconnected "urban villages," where housing is a short walk from restaurants and offices, often in the same complex, coming together in a European streetscape ambience.** Using the model of the hilltowns of Italy, residences would be designed around public buildings and squares, creating a walkable community. The remainder of the land would be protected in perpetuity, part wilderness, part recreation area. Called the Wild Heritage Plan, the emphasis would be on providing diverse and active places

to live with a strong connection to the wild history of the land.

THE WILD HERITAGE CENTERPIECE: WILDERNESS, RANCHING, AND RECREATION

By making urban areas focused and contiguous, we can save large blocks of wild land for diverse uses. Chiquita Canyon would be preserved as a sanctuary for its population of California gnatcatchers, saving its irreplaceable prime coastal sage scrub habitat. Verdugo Canyon, adjacent to Caspers Wilderness Park and the Cleveland National Forest should be "hazard zoned" because of significant wildfire risk. We propose a Wild Heritage Park in this area, in partnership with the local Juaneño band of Indians, with an interpretive site and recreated Indian pueblo. A significant part of this land would remain a working ranch. Finally, the San Mateo Creek watershed areas, adjacent to San Clemente, should be integrated into the existing Donna O'Neill Land Conservancy. This would preserve and restore wetland habitat for the Arroyo Toad, Southern Steelhead Trout, and Tidewater Goby, and maintain the clean ocean quality for surfing at Trestles.

We urge the Rancho Mission Viejo Company to support the Wild Heritage Plan for Rancho Mission Viejo.

Jack Eidt, Paul Carlton, and Jerry Collamer are the Wild Heritage Planners – a group of local activists dedicated to preserving wilderness while still providing for a significant amount of new housing in Rancho Mission Viejo. We share their proposal as another perspective for protecting South Orange County's natural areas.

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.

for more information or directions:
Call Brittany McKee, Conservation Organizer at 949-361-7534 or brittany.mckee@sierraclub.org



Sunday, April 10

SIERRA SAGE/FRIENDS OF THE FOOTHILLS

donna o'neill land conservancy

Enjoy the beautiful scenery and spring wild flowers on this slow paced nearly level 1.5 mile walk. A FOF member will explain the need to preserve this ecological hot spot. Meet 8:30 am at the S OC rideshare point Bring water, sunscreen, hat. Donation of \$5/adult to support the work of the Conservancy is appreciated. Rain cancels.

Sunday, May 8

SIERRA SAGE/FRIENDS OF THE FOOTHILLS

donna o'neill land conservancy mother's day walk

Bring your mom out for a beautiful morning walk through the wild flowers on this slow paced nearly level 1.5 mile hike. A FOF member will explain the need to preserve this ecological hot spot. Meet 8:30 am at the S OC rideshare point. Bring water, sunscreen, hat. Donation of \$5/adult to support the work of the Conservancy. Rain cancels.

Saturday, June 18

SIERRA SAGE/FRIENDS OF THE FOOTHILLS

trestles beach

Fun at the beach! Enjoy this morning walk down to the famous surfing beach at Trestles. Look for birds at the pond at end of San Mateo Creek. Two members of the FOF will discuss the importance of this world ecological hot spot and the environmental damage that an extension of the Foothill South Toll Road would do to this area. Meet 8:30 am at the Trestles surfers' parking lot (From I-5 exit Cristianitos at South end of San Clemente, go Left one block, Left again to the lot). Bring water, sunscreen, and hat. Rain cancels.

Saturday, July 23

SIERRA SAGE/FRIENDS OF THE FOOTHILLS

trestles beach

Summer fun at the beach, escape the heat and enjoy this walk to the famous surfing beach at Trestles and the extensive wetlands area through which San Mateo Creek flows. A FOF member will discuss the ecological importance of the surrounding area and the damage that connection of the proposed Foothill South Toll Road at I-5 would do to that area. Bring water, sunscreen, and hat. Meet 8:30am at Trestles surfers' parking lot. (Take Cristianitos off-ramp from I-5 at South end of San Clemente, go Left one block and Left to lot). Rain cancels.

it's time to think smarter

**IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO PROTECT THE LAST
NATURAL AREAS IN ORANGE COUNTY!**

Join us on Wednesday, April 27, 2005 for an inspiring evening with keynote speaker Bill Fulton. Find out how innovative smart growth planning can increase housing and still leave a natural legacy, clean water, and clean air for our children. Could it work in Orange County? Be there April 27th and find out!

William Fulton has played a key role in re-shaping the way urban and metropolitan growth issues are debated in the post-suburban era. He is president of Solimar Research Group, a California-based public policy research firm. He is also economic development columnist for *Governing* magazine and founding editor of *California Planning & Development Report*, a monthly newsletter covering land-use issues.

Mr. Fulton is one of the nation's leading commentators on urban planning, metropolitan growth, and economic development. He is the author of three books considered classics in their field. *The Reluctant Metropolis: The Politics of Urban Growth in Los Angeles*, *The Regional City: Planning for the End of Sprawl* and *Guide to California Planning*.

Mr. Fulton speaks and lectures on land use planning and economic development issues throughout the country and often appears on television and radio.

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**KEYNOTE SPEAKER
BILL FULTON-**

journalist, urban planner, researcher, best-selling author, and Ventura City Councilmember.

**Additional presentation by the
Wild Heritage Planners**

When:

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