

FSVA Newsletter

Spring 2007

San Jacinto Ranger District



www.fsva.org

FSVA PHOTOS AND ARTICLES USED FOR FOREST PUBLICATIONS

The San Bernardino National Forest recently chose to include an article about the Deer Springs/Suicide Rock Trail written by FSVA Volunteer, Ken Garrett. The FSVA also supplied a photo for the article. The story and image will appear in the "2007 San Bernardino National Forest Visitors Guide".

Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region Cartographer, Joan Steber selected an FSVA image of Lily (Tahquitz) Rock for the cover of the "San Bernardino National Forest Atlas, 7.5' Quadrangle Topographic Atlas". The Atlas is in the process of being reprinted. The color photo will appear on the cover of the new version of the publication.

This is an honor for the FSVA!

Congratulations to Brad Eells, FSVA Photography Coordinator, for having his photos chosen by the Forest for these two SBNF publications. Congrats also to Ken Garrett for having his article chosen for the Guide. The Guide is free, the Atlas will be sold by the FSVA, both will be available soon at the ranger station. Thanks to Brad for writing this article. G.H.

VOLUNTEERS ATTEND RADIO TRAINING AND FIND A BLIZZARD

FSVA Volunteers Andy Koperdak, Noel Portelli, and Brad Eells arrived at the Idyllwild Ranger Station for Federal Interagency Communications Center (*otherwise known as our San Bernardino Dispatch or Dispatch*) training on Tuesday, March 27th. The day was filled with excellent information but was cut short when an intense snowstorm began.

The training terminated about an hour early due to the weather conditions. The snow was coming down steadily to below 3,000 feet on Highway 74. A snow rain mix continued all the way to Cranston Station. Some Hemet roads were flooded from precipitation received in town. *Thanks to Brad Eells, FSVA Wilderness Ranger. G.H.*



"Horsethief Creek with Alders and Cottonwoods leafed out, 2-2007. Photo by Brad Eells"

SANTA ROSA WILDERNESS PATROLS

The Santa Rosa Wilderness Cactus Spring Trail has seen a lot of recent attention from FSVA Rangers. Five separate, large fire rings were discovered in February. All the rings were located within a few yards of beautiful Horsethief Creek.

Five FSVA Rangers, Bob Romano, Mike Worden, Ron Lawson, Kathy Bowman, and John Edmiston along with Melinda Lyon hiked in on February 18th to join Brad Eells who overnighted at the old Wellman stock corral to clean up the rings and restore the area. Dave and Gail Heveron brought coffee and Danish to share at the trailhead before they hiked down. Hundreds of rocks were removed, charcoal buried, logs relocated and trail markers repaired during the project.

Rangers Bob Romano and Brad Eells hiked in a few weeks later to find the area still in pristine state. They hiked 5 miles out to locate Cactus Spring. The Spring was located and does have a very small amount of water running in it. The area is a stunning Pinyon and Juniper forest with tremendous views of Santa Rosa Mountain and Toro Peak. *Thanks to Brad and Bob for organizing the cleanup, and Brad for writing the article.*



(L) to (R): Mike Worden, Bob Romano, Ron Lawson, John Edmiston, Kathy Bowman, Brad Eells
Photo by Melinda Lyon, FSV Liaison, District Wilderness and Trails Manager

WILDERNESS COORDINATOR REPORT

Drought. This subject is frequently mentioned to me by users of the forest and wilderness. People mention it after seeing the little or no snow pack in our high country or when they see lighter or no flow in our usually generous running springs and creeks during the early spring season. Many areas of Southern California are at or below 20 per cent of a normal rainfall season for this time of year. It was the driest fall and winter in over a century. The wettest months are already past and the end of the rainfall year comes on June 30. The fire officials have said the fire season has already started. Some experts say the fire season never ended this winter. Bill Patzert, who works at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, and is known as "[The Prophet of California Climate](#)," states the following in an article dated April 13, 2007: "We've had less rain, more extreme heating days, and longer heat waves. I call it the Extreme Makeover of California."

Some of those in the urban areas will say they are not concerned. A mentioned reason is that 2006 was a wet year and has left above-average storage conditions in most major reservoirs and groundwater basins. Most of Southern California relies on imported water from a number of sources. So as long as these sources are abundant they might remark that we need the rain but are not really effected or that concerned. They do not think anything about the drought conditions in the local mountains unless they are very frequent visitors to the mountains or live there.

A recent article in the *Los Angeles Times* by Bettina Boxall is titled "Perfect drought on the way in California". What is a perfect Southern California drought? According to the article, a perfect drought is

when nature shortchanges every major branch of the far-flung water network that sustains 18 million people. It mentions that nature is pulling a triple whammy on Southern California this year. Whether it's the Sierra, the Southland or the Colorado River Basin, every place that provides water to the region is dry. The article goes on: "Usually it's reasonably wet in at least one of those places. But not this year."

As a mountain land owner who also lives full time at Lake Hemet, I pay particular attention to the amount of rain that falls and what the predictions are for future rain during the coming months. Many recent events like the Esperanza and Old Fires and the recent massive pine tree die off increase my level of attention to this subject. The National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center is predicting a large area of drought is expected to persist into July across California. I am not surprisingly concerned.

Records of the past state the facts but no human knows what the future will bring. It is possible this drought will be short lived. 2004 and 2005 were very wet years. There is also work being done on the district to ease my mind about fire danger. Fuel reduction projects are underway along Hwy. 74 and 243 along with the Pine Cove Fuel Break and work around Idyllwild. Fire prevention education at this time is very important.

But how can I help to protect the forest from fires and disregard? I am proud to do this every week with other volunteers on the district. FSV volunteers go out into the community and the forest to promote fire safety and respect of the forest by teaching and asking forest users to follow the rules and guidelines set forth by the Forest Service to protect our forests from damage and destruction from careless and illegal use. I am fortunate to know and work with some very dedicated volunteers who care about the San Jacinto Wilderness, Santa Rosa Wilderness and other areas of the San Jacinto Ranger District as much as I do.

As this drought year unfolds, plants and animals in the forest will likely be under more stress. The fire danger will likely increase. We can all help our forest get through this by being out there as much as possible spreading the word of no fires and protecting the resources. I know we are up to the task. Thank you for your efforts and time.

Bob Romano, Volunteer Wilderness Coordinator

NEW 2007 SBNF MAPS AND ...

Come and get 'em! We now have the new, updated map for sale at the front desk of the ranger station. The last San Bernardino National Forest (SBNF) map update was 1994 and FS lands on our district have increased quite a bit since then. The **new map shows much more green FS lands** which is good

news for volunteers as the increased lands gives us more opportunities for patrols, especially in May Valley.

Cost is \$9.00 (price set by the FS in Washington, D.C. due to increased printing costs). I was lucky and proud to be one of three district reps to work on the map updates in San Bernardino (albeit because John and Melinda were unable to go).

The SBNF Topo Atlas (wire bound 7.5' topo maps) is being reprinted (with Tahquitz Rock cover photo by Brad Eells!) and we will sell it again when available. It was a very popular item.

Now it's easy to see where the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument boundaries overlap our San Jacinto Ranger District boundaries on the SBNF map and the Atlas' maps.

These maps also show the **State Game Refuge** with hash marks (/////); they do not appear on all the legends), as does the large, FS made San Jacinto Wilderness Map (green/gray cover), a few of you have asked about the refuge boundary recently. As you know, firearms are not allowed in the State Game Refuge, firearms are allowed in wilderness areas, and **most of the SJ Wilderness is within the refuge so firearms are not allowed in most of the wilderness.** Some of the Refuge extends west of the wilderness to encompass the town of Idyllwild.

In general, while maps are very good guides, I have never seen a map that is 100% correct and I will tell the forest visitors so if the situation will benefit from it.

Gail Heveron, Retail Outlet Volunteer and Wilderness Ranger

ISLE OF THE BLUECURL (*trichostema austromontanum ssp. compactum*)

When Mount San Jacinto stands above the clouds like it did a few weeks ago, it is easy to imagine that the mountain is part of the heavens instead of the land. From the northern slope of Fuller Ridge looking down towards Cabazon the valley was not visible below the clouds. The mountain showed itself as an island, and the clouds showed themselves as the sea with its waves splashing against the island shore. From the base of the mountain where the Coachella Valley begins just east of Banning, the air just above the land was filled with enough blowing sand for the base of the Mount San Jacinto to disappear into haze. Above the haze dense rain clouds hovered over the land. Above the clouds stood Mount San Jacinto, tall and shining in the sunlight, looking as if it rose up from the clouds, not from the earth.

Meanwhile, on this mountain island of the sky, just east of Divide Peak the seeds of a delicate blue-violet flower, one that grows nowhere else in the world, rested in the soil beneath the shallow waters of Hidden Lake. When the weather warms, the seeds will sprout, leaf, bloom and die by the drying edge of the vernal lake. When the winter is past and the mountain rises up from the desert floor instead of rising from the clouds, the mountain will remain an island in the heavens to the Hidden Lake Bluecurl. The little island flower will testify to the improbability of life and the beauty of the heavens and the earth.

Ken Garrett, FSVV Volunteer



Bluecurl

**The US Forest Service Wildlife Dept.
wants YOU!**



Do you have what it takes to be on the Frog Squad?

- Do you like to be outdoors?
- Do you like talking to people?
- Do you like wearing a uniform?
- Do you like using a communication radio?
- Do you like protecting endangered species and their habitat?
- Do you like educating about wildlife and the National Forest?
- Do you have at least two free days a month (preferably weekends)?

If you answered YES to the above questions then...

**YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES
to join...
The Frog Squad!**

It's that time of year again! The endangered Mountain Yellow-Legged Frog activity season is approaching. This year we will again be protecting areas for their sake as required by US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Endangered Species Act. This means we will need a good team of monitors.

We need volunteers to monitor creek activity at Dark Canyon Camp Ground, along the North Fork of the San Jacinto River and at Fuller Mill Creek. Both places are near Idyllwild in the San Jacinto Mountains. These areas will be off limits to any activity within 10' of the creeks edge. USFS staff will be installing our informative signs, attempting to prevent any violations and writing tickets for people who don't comply. Volunteers will monitor the areas, keep notes and most important approach and engage visitors to educate about frogs and the creek closure, calling on USFS staff if tickets need to be written.

We would like this to be more than just frog/creek guarding duty (though of course that is of the utmost importance). We feel that both visitor experience and the natural areas that they visit can be enhanced by more education about the plants, animals and history of the area. We envision a team of "Forest Docents" available for "patrol" of the areas - actively making public contact and preventing violations through education, while being available to the public for additional questions about the area and the agency.

Monitoring will be required approximately May - Oct, mostly during the hot part of the day, on weekends and holidays, but other times and days would be very helpful too! Included in the 'benefits package' is free camping at Dark Canyon Campground on your monitoring days.

If you are interested please contact:
USFS Wildlife Technician, Heidi Sellers. office: 909-382-2945; email: hsellers@fs.fed.us Idyllwild Ranger Station, P.O. Box 518, 54270 Pine Crest Rd., Idyllwild, CA 92549.

GOOD SAFETY TIP!

Put your car keys beside your bed at night.

If you hear a noise outside your home or someone trying to get in your house, just press the panic button for your car. The alarm will be set off, and the horn will continue to sound until either you turn it off or the car battery dies.

This tip came from a neighborhood watch

coordinator.

Next time you come home for the night and you start to put your keys away, think of this: It's a security alarm system that you probably already have and requires no installation.

Test it. It will go off from most everywhere inside your house and will keep honking until your battery runs down or until you reset it with the button on the key fob chain. It works if you park in your driveway or garage. If your car alarm goes off when someone is trying to break in your house, odds are the burglar or rapist won't stick around....after a few seconds all the neighbors will be looking out their windows to see who is out there and sure enough the criminal won't want that.

And remember to carry your keys while walking to your car in a parking lot. The alarm can work the same way there.....This is something that should really be shared with everyone.

Maybe it could save a life.

Via Email from Dolores Hewitt, Asst. Wilderness Coordinator

UPCOMING EVENTS

Spring is here! On the San Jacinto Ranger District, and we are gearing up for the summer season. We anticipate a good and busy year and are preparing for it. There is a lot starting to take shape and we would like to offer FSVA members some **opportunities and challenges** to get involved in a variety of activities. The following are activities/projects coming up that may be of interest to pick and chose from. We appreciate your interest and support, and with an anemic budget this year can really use the help. So what's coming up??

Crosscut Saw Training: Date: To be determined. Want to learn how yesterday's Foresters made trees disappear from the trails and elsewhere? Then be sure to participate and get yourself certified. We really need a group of people certified in this skill to help with removing down trees on trails. Location: To Be determined. Contact: Melinda, 909-382-2929. mlyon@fs.fed.us

Black Mountain Campground Clean Up/Campout: May 5, 2007. Help us get Boulder Basin Campground and Black Mountain Group Campground cleaned up/spruced up to be ready for opening. Make a weekend of it. Help clean up the campgrounds on Saturday (exercise and fresh air), campout Saturday night at Boulder Basin Campground (with a BBQ and good company, of course), and attend the Volunteer training on Sunday, May 6. Location: Boulder Basin Campground on Black Mountain, beginning Saturday AM (as soon as you can get there,

or let John know if you want to camp Friday night as well). Families welcome. Contact: John Ladley, 909-382-2934, jladley@fs.fed.us

Volunteer Refresher Training: May 6, 2007. Get your training up to date and caught up on current news. Location: Idyllwild Ranger Station. Time: 0900 – 1400.

Contact: Melinda, 909-382-2929. mlyon@fs.fed.us

Volunteer Refresher Training: May 12, 2007. Second chance. Get your training up to date and caught up on current news. Location: Idyllwild Ranger Station. Time: 0900 – 1400. Contact: Melinda, 909-382-2929. mlyon@fs.fed.us

Adventure Pass On-The-Ground Practical Compliance Training: Thanks to everyone who participated in the recent training (we will try to hold another one later in the year for interested folks who could not attend the last one). For ride along experience with our Recreation Field Staff, please contact John Ladley, 909-382-2934, jladley@fs.fed.us with possible days/dates to schedule on a case-by-case basis. The extra hands and eyes in the field have been helpful for the Recreation Staff and interesting for the folks joining them. Extra help is particularly needed on weekends.

Visitor Information Center, Front Desk: If you are interested in taking a break from the hot and dusty trails and helping at the front desk (yes, test your knowledge), please contact: John Ladley, 909-382-2934, jladley@fs.fed.us

Idyllwild Earth Fair: May 19, 2007. Need someone to organize a booth as well as people to staff it. Contact: Melinda, 909-382-2929. mlyon@fs.fed.us

National Trails Day: June 2, 2007. Help is needed to plan and organize a trail project. See the American Hiking Society's website for more information, americanhiking.org. Contact: Melinda, 909-382-2929. mlyon@fs.fed.us

Trail Maintenance: Beginning in May 2007, days to be determined: Work with the FS trail crew maintaining trails. Contact: Melinda, 909-382-2929. mlyon@fs.fed.us

Packing: Packers needed to support Wilderness Volunteers and trail crews. 1) Take supplies to the admin camp in the Wilderness, probably in May after trails are cleared; 2) SCA trail crew support, mid June – end of June; 3) Americorps PCT trail crew support, mid June – mid July. Contact: Melinda, 909-382-2929. mlyon@fs.fed.us

PCT Cleanup: Cleanup and pack out abandoned camp on the PCT near Fobes Saddle. Need someone to set this up and coordinate. Contact: Melinda, 909-382-2929. mlyon@fs.fed.us

Thank you to everyone for your interest and efforts in getting what we anticipate to be a busy and

challenging year off to a good start. We put a lot on this list. But, there is a lot going on here. We wanted to try and put it all in one letter and give folks the opportunity to pick and choose activities that they are interested in or interested in trying. We certainly appreciate the assistance. Please let Melinda or John know if you have any questions, suggestions, or comments.

Thank you,
Melinda, John, and the San Jacinto Ranger District Recreation Staff
(Written by John Ladley, Recreation Officer - Forw. By Melinda Lyon via Email)

DRIVING WHILE FATIGUED

We know that near-miss accidents can serve as free lessons to help us identify hazardous conditions and behaviors in the workplace, but a new research study suggests may predict who is at risk for accidents.

The Forest Service has a history and recognizes the dangers created by fatigue. Work-Rest guidelines are in place to keep us safe.

A study published in the March 1 issue of the journal *SLEEP* finds that sleepy near-miss accidents may be dangerous precursors to an actual accident.

This study indicates that near-miss sleepy accidents are common and dangerous. The near-miss sleepy accidents occur in 14 times more people than actual sleepy accidents, and the near-misses appear to predict who is at risk for any type of actual accidents in a dose-response fashion.

In a sense, drowsy driving is similar to driving under the influence, as sleepiness results in a slower reaction time, decreased awareness, impaired judgment and an increased risk of getting involved in an accident -- resulting in unnecessary deaths or injuries to innocent people.

The amount of sleep you get affects everything else you do: how you think, how you feel, how you perform and even how you drive. Sleep deprivation may affect a driver's awareness of his or her surroundings, as well as reduce one's ability to react to situations in time. As a result, this endangers the lives of themselves -- and others -- by increasing the likelihood of causing an accident.

Tips offered to avoid sleepiness while driving:

1. Get enough sleep at night
2. Take breaks while driving
3. Do not drink alcohol.
4. Do not drive late at night
5. ...and abide by the Work Rest Guidelines !!!

David C. Edgar - Forest Safety Officer / Hazmat Specialist, Forest Service Chief Accident Investigator, San Bernardino National Forest



USFS CONTACT INFO

Idyllwild Ranger Station: 909-382-2922, -2923, or 951-659-2117 then 5. Open 7 days, 8-4:30.
 Website: www.fs.fed.us/r5/sanbernardino.
 Melinda Lyon: mlyon@fs.fed.us, 909-382-2929, FSVA Liaison, District Wilderness and Trails Manager

MONUMENT CONTACT INFO

USFS and BLM are partners in the Santa Rosa & San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, which offers classes, hikes, and events. Call or visit the Visitor Center, 51-500 Hwy 74, Palm Desert, 760-862-9984 for a schedule.

FSVA BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COORDINATORS

President:	Mike Taggart
Vice President and Equestrian Parade Unit Captain:	Karleen Esparza
Treasurer:	Denise Edmiston
Secretary:	Barbara Haines
Wilderness Coordinator:	Bob Romano
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Board member:	Tom Unwin
Website, Volunteer Hours, and Uniform Coordinator:	Scott Huseth

Asst. Wilderness Coordinator (non-board member):	Dolores Hewitt
Webmaster (non-board member):	Brian Otto
Photography Coordinator (non-board member):	Brad Eells
Newsletter Coordinator (non-board member):	Sharon Middleton
Retail Outlet (non-board member):	Gail Heveron

Note: The FSVA Board meets at the Idyllwild Ranger Station Conference Room. All volunteers are invited to attend. Please call Melinda Lyon at 909-382-2929, or Email mlyon@fs.fed.us for date and time of meetings.

PASS AREA RELAY FOR LIFE CANCER WALK

It has come to our attention that many of the USFS firefighters and family wanted to be apart of the Pass Area Relay for Life Cancer Walk that Jess and myself have been supporting for the last few years. We have been supporting the American Cancer Society through the Three Rings Ranch Elementary School in Beaumont where Jess' mom works. She has been the Team Leader for the past few years for this school, so Jess and I have helped her with this in the past. This year we decided to remember Jess by turning our booth into a firehouse theme, in remembrance of the men of Engine 57.

A few things that we do that we would love your help with are: The Penny Drive. In the school each class has a penny jar to collect money for the American Cancer Society. If you would like to donate pennies or money please make a collection and contact Karen McLean at 951-845-3916.

The American Cancer Society also has a Luminaria walk in the evening. If you would like to donate money that way there are forms that you can fill out. The Luminaries are \$5.00 and are set up to allow individuals to be recognized either through: In Honor, In Memory, or In Gratitude for people dealing with cancer in their lives.

The walk takes place at Beaumont Soccer Park, which is located on the corner of Beaumont Ave. and Brookside. If you would like to come to this event take the 10 to Beaumont and exit Beaumont Ave. take Beaumont Ave. approx. 2.5 miles towards Cherry Valley and the Soccer Park will be on your right hand side of the street. The booth that Jess' mom and I will be a part of will be located on the Northwest corner of the park at site 305.

If any questions, would like to donate money or come be apart of any of the activities please contact me by May 3rd at the number above. Thank you, Karen McClean
Via Email from John Clays, Engineer 35, SBNF, to Melinda Lyon, FSVA Liaison, District Wilderness & Trails Manager.

ESPERANZA SUPPORT UPDATE

In an effort to share information with everyone regarding Esperanza support activities, we are sharing

“nuggets” from notes sent to employees by the Engine 57 support folks.

- Work is continuing on the Loutzenhisser house.
- There is still no word regarding a date for the release of the investigation report. We hope to hear very soon.
- Most of the donations have been distributed to families; a few are still in process.
- Anne Kellogg continues to conduct Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) sensing and support to the forest, firefighter families, retirees, and volunteers. She is available to share information about findings and patterns at any volunteer meeting.
- Plans are being made for Forest participation in several national and regional memorial events honoring our fallen firefighters. They include:
 - Wildland Firefighter Foundation Family weekend in Boise, ID May 19-20, IAFF
 - IAFF Fallen Fire Fighter Memorial, September 14-15 in Colorado Springs, CO
 - National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Memorial in Emmitsburg, MD on Oct. 5-7
 - California Professional Firefighters Memorial Ceremony in Sacramento on September 29th
 - Riverside County Wildland Firefighter Memorial on December 27th and 28th.
- A multi-agency anti-arson summit is being planned for Wednesday, June 13th.

For more information, contact Rita at the Idyllwild Ranger Station, 909-382-3085.

Rita Cantu, Engine 57 Support.

MR. CLEAN WAS HERE!



Photo by Sharon Middleton

Thanks to help from Bob and Norma Romano, Brad Eells, Mike Worden, Kathy Bowman, Ron Lawson, Sharon Middleton, and Melinda Lyon, the FSVA building at Lake Hemet is all ready for storage supplies. Sunday, April 22, the above volunteers and FSVA Liaison spent most of the

morning and part of the afternoon painting and cleaning. The weather cooperated in order that painted file cabinets were able to be moved outside to dry and the walls and ceiling dried quickly. It was a fun and productive day! Now to plan an Open House....

Submitted by Sharon Middleton, Editor

FROM THE DESK OF MELINDA

This winter has been a busy one – maybe because we didn’t have much of a winter. It has been great to have so much help with projects as well as patrolling over the winter. I was even able to get out and participate in a couple of projects which were a lot of fun and were organized by some of you.

This summer will no doubt be busy and challenging due to a decrease in our budget. There is a list of projects that we can use help with in this newsletter. Please take a look at it and if there is something that sounds interesting, contact the listed contact. It looks like we will have a Student Conservation Association high school crew this summer based in the San Jacinto Wilderness for a few weeks which should be a big help as our trail crew is going to be drastically reduced this summer. I’m looking forward to Amanda and Gail returning. Amanda returns around May 1 so hopefully we can begin to remove some of those down trees on the trails. It takes two (at least) to run the crosscut saw so if you would like to help, please let me know as it may be a few weeks before we have another trail person. And Gail’s return at the end of May should make scheduling, training, and organizing much, much easier.

I hope to see all of you at one of the refresher trainings in May and maybe in the Wilderness or at least the office this summer. Thank you for all that you do!

Melinda Lyon, FSVA Liaison, District Wilderness and Trails Manager, mlyon@fs.fed.us, 909-382-2929,

**Don’t Forget - Refresher Training
– May 6 and again on May 12.
Please RSVP to Melinda!**

While you are in volunteer status, volunteers are considered as federal employees for the purpose of compensation for work injuries. To ensure this coverage, you must attend annual refresher training, schedule your volunteer time, work within the established guidelines, complete trail reports, and report your time.