



A global day of activities focused on carbon emissions reduction is planned Sunday 10/10/10. Volunteers from AV Conservancy and other organizations are sewing reusable shopping bags from recycled fabric, to be distributed to the community on 10/10/10. If you can donate fabric or thread, or if you or an organization you know can help sew bags or distribute them, let us know.

## Palmdale Water District approves wetlands conservation – or not?

In 2007, Antelope Valley Conservancy approached Palmdale Water District, seeking to purchase 85 acres of historic wetlands owned by PWD. General Manager Dennis LaMoreaux and then-Director Dick Wells agreed to pursue establishing a partnership for wetlands stewardship under conservation easement. AVC garnered \$175,000 in approved grants, from US Fish and Wildlife Service and California's Proposition 84, to fund the project. Two years of negotiations and legal review later, the conservation easement wording was finalized.

On April 28, 2010, the PWD Board of Directors approved the recordation of the conservation easement, pending final legal review of the document. After the approval vote, a citizen came to the podium and said, "I've lived here a short time, only 60 years. My father helped to build the Palmdale Ditch and



Spillway. I love the wetlands there, and I am really happy someone is doing something to preserve it."

But what did PWD really approve? After the vote, PWD told the Conservancy there are additional contingencies and delays, and the Minutes from the PWD meetings (see *Wetlands*, page 2)

## Director's Corner:

### AV Conservancy is five years old



I look back on the past five years and 10,000 hours volunteered to Antelope Valley Conservancy, with great satisfaction.

AVC's preservations, public policy impacts, and role in promoting stakeholder information and engagement have far exceeded my expectations. What a journey it has been!

We founded the conservancy, naïve of the big-money politics of land, believing we were a needed community charity that would be welcomed. Instead, local government redoubled efforts to control conservation funding for development interests, and AVC volunteers found themselves targeted by threats from government personnel, and shunned and defamed by local "conservationists".

AVC persevered in its mission, holding to our integrity and professionalism. We garnered necessary government authorizations, we wrote grants, and we participated in regional planning and educational outreach. We refused to participate in one-sided compromises, that leave our ecosystem compromised.

After publicity led to the destruction of the very habitats we worked to preserve, we learned to keep our mouths shut about our preservations. We learned how to face up to bullies, call it like it is, and not get left holding the bag. And now, with strong partnerships, and the very real opportunity to preserve

(see *Five Years* on page 6)

## Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP)

To “balance renewable energy development with natural resource conservation” a Natural Community Conservation Plan for desert regions is being fast tracked, using hand-selected scientists and stakeholders. Government agencies that are impacted by budget cuts are creating new powers and income for their agencies, and enacting new rules that bar free-market corporations from controlling their own assets. Is Antelope Valley on the map? Visit [www.energy.ca.gov/33by2020/documents/index.html](http://www.energy.ca.gov/33by2020/documents/index.html).

## Wetlands *(continued from page 1)*

reference a Palmdale Ditch Enclosure, which is unrelated to AVC’s conservation easements and was not discussed during those meetings. Yet PWD has, to date, denied our request to correct its Minutes.

The verbiage jeopardizes use of the grants on PWD lands because federal law prohibits these public funds from fulfilling mitigation. Even though the easements do not fulfill the terms of PWD’s mitigation for its Ditch Enclosure, the erroneous statements in the Minutes are too easily misconstrued. Furthermore, the grant schedule is running out, the Prop 84 funds have been unfrozen and must be spent promptly, and PWD’s delays are jeopardizing the project. The grants would pay for easement recordation, biological study, a site management plan, interventions to secure hazards and remove trash and invasive species, and other work that is sorely needed.



Conservation easements establish a stewardship partnership that is appropriate only when the landowner is committed to preserving the conservation values of the land. Regrettably, these events have raised some doubt as to PWD’s genuine commitment.

### Grants moved to other lands

Fortunately, the Conservancy has permission from its grantors to move some of its grant funding to other lands, and has options on other worthy preservation properties in the Rift Zone. But, if the grants are applied to other lands, it is very unfortunate that the Una Wetlands, and the special species that rely on its habitats, would continue to suffer, without stewardship, proper planning, or the financial support that is so badly needed there.

## Fairmont Butte Racetrack



The next hearing on this proposed racetrack and commercial development, at Avenue D and 150<sup>th</sup> Street West, will be held by the County of Los Angeles Regional Planning Commission on August 18, at the Hall of Records.

Comments can be submitted by email to [jsackett@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:jsackett@planning.lacounty.gov). Anyone interested in carpooling to the meeting can contact Dean Webb at (661) 948-4123, [LDWEBBO@AOL.COM](mailto:LDWEBBO@AOL.COM).

Thank you, Senator George Runner, for changing your position from support to neutral. Rural communities appreciate your support!

Several sources say that Antelope Acres residents are trying to get their Rural Town Council to reverse its previous vote of support.

## AV Area Plan Update

Public comments on the Antelope Valley Area Plan Update Preliminary Draft, Goals & Policies are due on August 16, 2010. Comments can be emailed to [tnc@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:tnc@planning.lacounty.gov).

## Correction Notice

The article by **Jean Youngquist**, *Locavores love Ben’s Corner*, was attributed to the wrong writer in our last issue. We apologize. We are deeply grateful to Jean Youngquist for all her wonderful work in the Antelope Valley.

## AV Conservancy's events expanded

Thanks to sponsorship from Lockheed Martin Aerospace and Los Angeles County Parks, Antelope Valley Conservancy was able to expand both of its annual spring events this year. The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Bicycle Ride offered youth activities, and the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Endangered Species Day Conference incorporated the fine arts.

### Bicycle Ride Day

The 2010 Antelope Valley Bicycle Ride returned to the Aqueduct for the first time since 2000. Twenty-, 30- and 60-mile riders completed the routes, from first-timers like Kathleen Angulo to veteran riders Bob Pluss and Bob Macdonald, who have ridden with us almost every year. The weather was incredible, the BBQ was yummy, and a good time was had by all.

Following the ride, we partnered with the Sheriffs BEAR Program and LAC Bicycle Coalition, to offer a Bicycle Obstacle Course, Helmet Fittings, Bicycle Safety Training, and more.

Three bicycles were raffled by the BEAR Program. When one winner, Chevy Eye, got home, he asked that his training wheels be removed and insisted his grandfather clock his mileage for a two-mile ride. Chevy hopes to ride ten miles by next year's Ride Day.

More photos at "About Us" on [www.avconservancy.org](http://www.avconservancy.org).



## Endangered Species Day Conference

Our observance of the fifth national Endangered Species Day incorporated a "Nature and the Arts" exhibit, and fine artists presented alongside conservation stewards.



A welcome from Endangered Species Day founder David Robinson was read by Rosamond CSD's Kathleen Spoor. Author Bonnie Stone highlighted AV natural areas. Biologist Mark Bratton explained the Tortoise Head Start Program at Edwards AFB. Artists Lorelle Miller and Laura Wambsgans explained their plein air painting group "Chasing Open Spaces." Jan DeLeeuw of TriCounty Watchdogs described projects proposed for our western valley. Kris Holladay discussed the inspiration for her Joshua tree studies. Author Charles Hood led an imaginary journey to an Antelope Valley transformed by ocean waters. Marcia Abbate spoke of species that rely on local habitats, and encouraged opposition to the proposed Fairmont Butte raceway. Conservancy Director Wendy Reed detailed the life of Jane Pinheiro, wildflower artist and founder of Saddleback Butte SP, the Poppy Reserve, eight wildflower sanctuaries, AVEK, AVHMC, and AV Allied Arts Association. Forest Service Biologist Peter Johnston introduced the endangered amphibians of our local forest. Work by Donna Weil, Liz Breault and national Endangered Species Day contest winners was also displayed.

## Editorial: Drought's real victims fishermen, not farmers

By Robert Speer, Editor

Reprinted by permission from Chico News & Review - 7/22/10  
<http://www.newsreview.com/chico/content?oid=1458596>

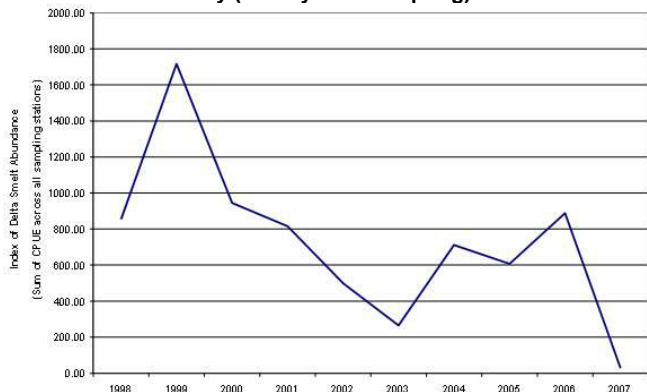
Think back a year or so, to last summer, when San Joaquin Valley farmers were predicting economic disaster because of reduced water allotments. That's when Fox News blowhard Sean Hannity descended on Fresno County's west side to accuse federal officials and environmentalists of turning the region into a modern dust bowl to protect "a two-inch fish," the Delta smelt.

In his zeal to condemn environmentalists and federal officials and make wealthy westside corporate agribusinesses happy, Hannity conveniently ignored the impact Delta pumping schedules had on the recreational and commercial fishing industries in Northern California. So much water had been pulled from the Delta to send southward that the salmon fishery collapsed, and the salmon harvest was essentially wiped out, putting thousands of fishermen out of business.

Yes, the drought hurt the valley. Westside towns like Mendota and Huron that are populated mostly by farm workers were hit especially hard. And Fresno County farm revenues were indeed down last year but by only 4.5 percent, according to the county's annual crop report, issued in mid-June. The county produced \$5.4 billion in receipts, exceeding \$5 billion for the third year in a row.

This year there's been more water, and life has gotten better in the San Joaquin Valley. The real problem in 2009 was the drought, not environmentalists or federal officials, as Hannity so grandiosely charged. And the real long-term victims were not the westside growers, or even their employees, who today are back at work, but rather the fishermen along the coast, who must contend with depleted fisheries for years to come because of the ability of the powerful ag industry to divert water southward.

Results of Department of Fish & Game Delta Smelt Abundance  
 20mm survey (Survey 5 - late Spring) 1998 to 2007



## SEA photos request

Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning would like your photographs of sites in the Significant Ecological Area (SEA) program for their new website. Please submit photos to [jlowry@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:jlowry@planning.lacounty.gov).

## Photo request from Buck McKeon

Throughout the month of July and August, I will be collecting pictures from constituents from all over the 25th District, which I will display on my website to highlight the beauty and uniqueness of our landscapes, cities, and towns. "Scenes from 25th District" will display the best of what our communities have to offer.

We truly do have some of the most majestic lands in the country.



Showcase your town's character by submitting pictures from your favorite locations, backdrops, and landscapes for my website. I will be posting them online in a revamped "Our Neighborhood" section on the site that will showcase these photos from many of our communities. All photos will be credited online with the photographer's name.

No matter if you are an amateur or professional photographer, I encourage you to participate.

Please submit all of your photos in JPG format to [CA25Photos@gmail.com](mailto:CA25Photos@gmail.com).

Please include in the title of the photo: photographer's name; item or scene in each photo; and location of shoot. For example: JohnDoe\_MagicMountain\_SantaClarita.JPG

I hope you'll take part in my photo collection and I look forward to seeing all of your submissions.

Best,

Buck McKeon  
 Member of Congress

## New ETI Corral #138 forms

Antelope Valley Conservancy has donated some of its assets to support the new ETI Corral #138. The "Barrel Springs Riders" group is led by Kimberly Dwight. They manage rides and Palmdale's Equestrian Arena. Visit [corral138.bravehost.com](http://corral138.bravehost.com).

## LADWP abandons power line

Desert conservationists are applauding a recent announcement that Los Angeles Department of Water and Power is ending its three-year effort to run the Green Path North transmission lines 80 miles through the San Bernardino Mountains, Desert Hot Springs, Coachella Valley, and Big Morongo Canyon Preserve.

## Green Valley man proposes tunnel for Barren Ridge power lines

Dale Kimmel of Green Valley thinks Alternative Route 2 for the Barren Ridge Transmission Line should go under Green Valley, not through it. Kimmel is suggesting that the Aqueduct's Elizabeth Lake Tunnel, which runs several miles from Fairmont Reservoir to Portal Canyon, could be refurbished to accommodate the Route 2 transmission lines.

Elizabeth Lake Tunnel was built by Los Angeles Department of Water and Power in 1907. It was the largest single construction project on the Aqueduct, and set speed records in its day. It doesn't take an engineer to appreciate that this 11-foot-wide tunnel was driven 27,000 feet through solid rock, and met in the middle within 1.5 inches in line and 5/8 inch in depth. The tunnel is easily accessed from either end.

Kimmel believes the tunnel will need to be rebuilt soon in any event, so why not complete the two projects in one? He believes the construction could be completed in about six months, and could be funded by the Federal Stimulus Package. Another benefit is that room could be left to accommodation for future installation of additional lines.

## Power line towers hinder firefight

Massive new transmission line towers in Palmdale and Leona Valley hindered aerial firefighting during the Crown Fire in late July. Planes and helicopters that drop water and fire retardant were unable to fly near the lines, particularly in heavy smoke. Fire-fighters had to let the areas of the transmission lines burn, and conduct a ground effort once the fire passed under the lines.



### AV High Desert Fall Century

Saturday, October 16. Sponsored by High Desert Cyclists. Information at [www.highdesertcyclists.com](http://www.highdesertcyclists.com) says the ride will feature a new route with scenic vistas, few stops, and light traffic, and routes for all levels of cyclists, including a challenging 100 miler. Come on out and ride!

### LanCoaster BLVD Bike Experience

Saturday, August 14, 9:00 a.m. Please arrive at least 15 minutes early ready to ride. Start/finish at Lancaster City Hall, 44933 Fern Avenue. All bicycles are welcome. We ride the streets of Lancaster led by police escorts. Pace is slow and social, 10 to 12 mph average, and about 2 hours total. Submitted by April Bartlett, [www.blockbikes.com](http://www.blockbikes.com).

### No One Left Behind Ride:

I am Bryan Laine, Manager of Bicycle Johns Lancaster. Every Sunday we have a beginner group ride known as NO ONE LEFT BEHIND. We put a lot of effort into rider safety. Weekly ride locations are posted on [Facebook/Bicycle Johns Lancaster](https://www.facebook.com/BicycleJohnsLancaster), and at [highdesertcyclists.com](http://highdesertcyclists.com). The Antelope Valley cyclist community is growing very fast, but the bicycle lanes are not. If the City tears up a street, it should add a bike lane. It only takes five feet and a white line on each side of the road, and some signs. Cyclists are limited to where they can safely cycle, due to the lack of bike lanes, and it is time we do something about it.



## Hubcar to bring carshare to AV

By Josh Batterson

Hubcar will soon offer carsharing to the Antelope Valley. Carsharing is a new transportation model that

helps reduce single occupancy vehicle commuting, fossil fuel emissions, and strains on public infrastructure. By encouraging the use of mass transit, carsharing also drives much needed revenue into local and state public transportation agencies.

Carshare members can use vehicles by the hour or the day, offering freedom to attend meetings, run errands, or deal with emergencies while still supporting use of public transportation.

Carshare members can be companies or individuals. Members pay a membership premium and small per-use fees. HubCar offers one of the most affordable carshare programs in the nation.

There are an estimated 8,000 carsharing vehicles in operation and 300,000 carsharing members in North America alone. For several years, carsharing has experienced 25% - 30% growth in the United States, Europe and Canada. The private corporation ZipCar and the nonprofit I-Go serving Chicago are the largest carsharing companies.

## Organic Gardening

Most of us consume pesticides every day, and nine of ten pesticides are endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs). Scientists are calling EDCs “obesogens” because they can mimic hormones, trick the endocrine system, and promote weight gain and obesity.



According to a recent study in *Environmental Health Perspectives*, eating an organic diet can reduce circulating pesticide EDCs to very low levels.

Antelope Acres resident Robert Kerekes shares his knowledge about organic gardening at meetings held the second Saturday of every month. Call 728-0095 for information, or visit [www.highdesert-organicgardener.com](http://www.highdesert-organicgardener.com).

## Five Years *(cont'd from page 1)*

thousands more acres, it has certainly been worth the effort. We are achieving what we set out to do; there is perhaps nothing more satisfying.

From a personal level, I am deeply fulfilled by the opportunity to improve public policy, participate in regional planning efforts, and give educational presentations. I enjoy your professional and personal friendships, and appreciate the chance to change the world.

I recently presented to sixth graders at Endeavor School, and received dozens of letters from students. They wrote that they were no longer littering, taking shorter showers, and had a newfound respect for the desert. My favorite letter said, “I did not understand what you meant that there is no planet B, then I realized there is no other planet to go to if we mess this one up. But why should we go to another planet if we’re just going to destroy it also?” Amen.



AVC's founding board, 2005 (from left) Wendy Reed, Johnny Munger, Margaret Rhyne, and Michael Powell.

Follow Antelope Valley Conservancy at

[www.avconservancy.org](http://www.avconservancy.org)

[facebook.com/avconservancy](https://facebook.com/avconservancy)

[twitter.com/avconservancy](https://twitter.com/avconservancy)



# Your contribution is really needed! 40 new wetland acres need endowment

**YES! I want to preserve habitats with my contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_**

- Please designate my donation to a nonwasting Sustaining Endowment.  
 Please not my donation in memory of \_\_\_\_\_  
 My employer \_\_\_\_\_ has a match program.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (if changed from label): \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

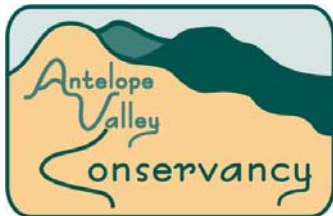
Email (please print clearly): \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide newsletter  by email  by US mail  no newsletter

## THANK YOU!

Antelope Valley Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) public benefit corporation.

Tax ID 20-3349581. Credit cards accepted online at [avconservancy.org](http://avconservancy.org) 08/2010



**Antelope Valley Conservancy**  
**P.O. Box 3133**  
**Quartz Hill, CA 93586-0133**

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

The Conservancy NEWS 

published by

Antelope Valley Conservancy  
P.O. Box 3133, Quartz Hill, CA 93586  
(661) 943-9000

[www.avconservancy.org](http://www.avconservancy.org).  
Wendy Reed, Editor

**The Conservancy News** incorporates  
the **AVTREC On Track** Newsletter

Subscriptions available  
via email or US Mail

## TIME REMAINING: 16 YEARS

According to the Land Trust Alliance, lands preserved in the next 16 years will be the last lands preserved on earth.

This work is critically important to our future, our planet, our community. Your help is critically important. Thank you for your interest and support.