

# The Conservancy NEWS



Newsletter of Antelope Valley Conservancy, Issue 15, February 2011

## Vote Antelope Valley Conservancy, visit Pasadena Patagonia in March



Antelope Valley Conservancy needs your help to win the top money in the **Patagonia Voice Your Choice** competition at the Pasadena store. We are one of three organizations chosen to compete. Please visit the Pasadena store in March, and vote Antelope Valley Conservancy! The

organization with the most votes earns \$2,500, second place earns \$1,500, and third place earns \$1,000. Help us win the large grant!! No purchase necessary. Just visit the Pasadena Patagonia store during March, and vote for Antelope Valley Conservancy.



White-faced ibis feeding at Piute Ponds by Kevin Lamborn

## Sign up now for Piute Ponds Tour March 19

Call 661/943-9000 or email [avconservancy@yahoo.com](mailto:avconservancy@yahoo.com) to sign up for a Piute Ponds tour hosted by Mark Hagan, Natural

Resources Manager. Limited spaces, first come—first served. Free. Base Security requires your personal information, like birth date and driver's license, for access to the Air Force Base.

## Volunteers needed, Earth Day Cleanup April 16



The annual Antelope Valley Conservancy Earth Day Cleanup will be held Saturday, April 16, from 9 AM to Noon. Volunteers are needed to clear blow trash and other trash from habitat lands. This is the cleanup's 17<sup>th</sup> year. Volunteers meet at Saddleback Butte

State Park Day Use area by 9 AM. Enter from Avenue J at 171<sup>st</sup> Street East. Wear sturdy shoes, gloves that fit, and sun screen, and bring a refillable water bottle. Make sure children's gloves fit.



**SATURDAY, MAY 7**

On the morning of May 7 cyclists leave from George Lane Park in Quartz Hill, on 20- 30- and 60-mile rides through the panoramic Antelope Valley and lakes communities. Riders should register now for the early registration discount (see attached form or website).

The rides include Aqueduct riding by special arrangement, scenic vistas, miles without stops, and challenging elevations.



Early bird registration is only \$35, most of which supports Antelope Valley Conservancy thanks to our wonderful sponsors Pacific Trust Escrow, Plegadis, California City Real Estate, and attorney Steve Fox. Registration includes water, food and rest stops, SAG, route slips, and more. These are buddy rides, so do bring a friend, and helmets are required.



Flyer/Registration Form is on our web site [avconservancy.org](http://avconservancy.org) along with online registration and sponsor

information, or call 661/943-9000.

## Congress renews tax incentive to help you conserve your land

An article provided to Antelope Valley Conservancy, as a proud member of the



Congress recently renewed, through 2011, an incentive that enhances the tax benefits of protecting your land by donating a voluntary conservation agreement. If you own land with important natural or historic resources, donating a voluntary conservation agreement can be one of the smartest ways to conserve the land you love, while maintaining your private property rights and possibly realizing significant federal tax benefits.

Antelope Valley Conservancy is specifically organized to offer these services, through its 170(b)(1)(A)(vi) tax status, Department of Fish and Game authorization to hold conservation easements, conservation easement insurance committed, and professionally managed to offer biological stewardship integrity.

These new incentives make it easier for average Americans, including working family farmers and ranchers, to donate the development rights on their land. The incentive:

- Raises the maximum deduction you can take for donating a voluntary conservation agreement from **30%** of your adjusted gross income (AGI) to **50%**;
- Allows you to deduct up to **100%** of your AGI if you qualify as a farmer or rancher; and
- Increases the number of years over which you can take deductions **from 6 years to 16 years**.

These changes allow many modest income landowners to deduct much more than they could under the old rules, bringing increased fairness to the tax code.

**These enhanced tax benefits will expire December 31, 2011, unless Congress acts. As things stand, you should aim to complete your donation by yearend.**

What do you need to know to enter into a voluntary conservation agreement? Here are some facts:

- A voluntary conservation agreement, also known as a conservation easement, is a legal agreement between a landowner and a nonprofit land trust, like Antelope Valley Conservancy, or government agency, that permanently limits uses of the land in order to protect important conservation values. It allows you to continue to own and use your land and to sell it or pass it on to heirs.
- When you enter into a voluntary conservation agreement with a land trust, you give up some of the rights associated with the land. For example, you might give up the right to build structures, while retaining the full right to grow crops. Future owners also will be bound by the agreement's terms. The land trust or agency is responsible for making sure the agreement terms are fulfilled.

- Voluntary conservation agreements vary widely, and Antelope Valley Conservancy can design an easement to meet your specific needs.
- A conservation donation requires not only a willing donor, but a qualified conservation organization to accept the donation.
- **A voluntary conservation agreement can help a landowner reduce tax burdens and pass land intact to the next generation.** By limiting the land's development potential, the agreement lowers its market value, which in turn lowers estate tax—and property taxes. Whether the agreement is donated during life or by will, it can make a critical difference in the heirs' ability to keep the land.
- If a conservation agreement benefits the public by permanently protecting important conservation resources and meets other federal tax code requirements, it can qualify as a tax-deductible charitable donation. The amount of the donation is the difference between the land's appraised value with the agreement and its value without.
- To qualify as a charitable donation, a conservation agreement must be permanent and meet other specific requirements discussed at: [www.lta.org/incentive-faqs](http://www.lta.org/incentive-faqs). A landowner should get professional financial planning and legal advice before making such a major donation.
- Contact Antelope Valley Conservancy to discuss your desires and your options. Call 661/943-9000 or visit us at [www.avconservancy.org](http://www.avconservancy.org).

Film: Make Your Landscape Act More Like A Sponge. Watch this film about slowing storm water flow:  
<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/stormfilm/>

## Renewable Energy Action Team (REAT) and Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP)

California Energy Commission, Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and California Department of Fish and Game (the REAT Agencies) are developing a Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) called the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP). Maps, information and participation opportunities are available at [www.drecp.org](http://www.drecp.org).

An NCCP provides streamlined regulatory permitting and mitigation options within the planning area, in this case, to allow renewable energy plants to be approved and built quickly.

The DRECP planning area is larger than the sum of all previous NCCPs. Recommendations for smaller planning areas are gaining some traction. The regulation that all endowments will be held by 501(c)(3) partner NFWF—for a fee—has also met with opposition.

DRECP Planning Area Map



The DRECP is a work in progress. It will be a better plan if stakeholders are part of the process. Antelope Valley Conservancy is awaiting funding of a grant that will help engage and empower community participation, specifically, to fund meetings, travel to meetings, legal services, printing, copying, and more. We will have more news on this soon.

## Punchbowl lands preserved

One man's loss is another's gain. Antelope Valley Conservancy's Una Wetlands I grants have preserved an alternate site, spring-fed wetlands at Devil's Punchbowl. Biologists with County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation have long desired to preserve this critical part of the Punchbowl ecosystem, wetlands forage habitat and connectivity but lacked funding. Thank you Northrop Grumman for contributing to the site's endowment!



Photo: Wendy Horn/Dave Numer

## Sign up to help Mohave Tui Chub

An endangered fish from the Mohave River lives on, in several populations at refuge locations. The largest of these populations, almost 6,000 fish, thrives in the "Chub Med" canals at China Lake Air Weapons Command in Ridgecrest. If you would be interested in joining a work party, helping to count fish, or more strenuous maintenance work, call 661/943-9000 or email [avconservancy@yahoo.com](mailto:avconservancy@yahoo.com) to get information and to get on the list.



This is a great site for Girl Scout, Boy Scout, or Eagle Scout Projects !!!

## Human overpopulation driving extinctions

The Center for Biological Diversity wants to raise awareness that human overpopulation is the driving force behind the current mass-extinction crisis, endangering:

- 12 percent of mammals
- 12 percent of birds
- 31 percent of reptiles
- 30 percent of amphibians
- 37 percent of fish

Earth's population has nearly doubled since the original Earth Day in 1970. Back then it was well understood that human overpopulation was causing global environmental challenges.

The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Earth Day passed in 2010, and unsustainable human population growth is too often ignored, even though it drives all major environmental problems that plague our planet.

The Center for Biological Diversity is publicizing the impacts of overpopulation. At 6.8 billion people, the human race is the most populous large mammal that has ever existed. Providing for the needs and wants of this many people—especially in the high-consumption, first-world nations—has absorbed 50% of the planet's freshwater and developed 50% of its landmass. Other species are running out of places to live.



### Dean Webb (1936-2010)



The Antelope Valley has lost a friend to the environmental community. On December 26, 2010, Lannie Dean Webb succumbed to a long standing illness. Dean is remembered as a soft spoken, cheerful champion of natural lands and trails. After retiring from a 36 year

career with NASA at Edwards Air Force Base, he devoted his energies to the California State Parks, Sierra Club, and local causes. He was a regular voice at City Council meetings and County workshops. Dean was an avid photographer, active in three photography clubs and manager of the AV Fair Photography Section. Dean served on the boards of the Red Rock Canyon Interpretive Association and Poppy Reserve/Mojave Desert Interpretive Association. He was recently honored by Sierra Club for his work on the Tejon Agreement. He helped several students through college, and volunteered at the Lancaster shelter for the homeless. Dean Webb was loved by many, and will be missed.

## CA State Parks News

**Volunteer training** for the Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve will be from 9 AM to 3 PM on Saturday Feb 26 and Saturday March 5 at the Poppy Reserve (15101 Lancaster Road). To sign up for the training, contact Jean Rhyne (jrhyne@parks.ca.gov).



**Jane Pinheiro Visitor's Center** at the Poppy Reserve will be open from Saturday, March 12 through Sunday, May 8, weekdays 10 to 4 and weekends 9 to 5. The Reserve itself will reopen March 1 all day for hiking and picnicking.

**New Office Location:** The California Department of Parks and Recreation Tehachapi District Office is moving, leaving its current location on 15<sup>th</sup> Street West in Lancaster to move into a new facility at

the Poppy Reserve sometime in March.

The facility

will be open during the week during regular business hours.

**Year Round Gift Shop:** The new facility will include a gift shop with books and other items related to the local environment available for sale to the public. All proceeds will go to the nonprofit Poppy Reserve / Mojave Desert Interpretive Association. PR/MDIA supports the Poppy Reserve and four other area state parks.

**Consider purchasing gifts from PR/MDIA for Easter and Mother's Day!**



Ron Niebrugge

## Endangered Species Day Art Contest



The annual Endangered Species Day Youth Art Contest is organized by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Endangered Species Coalition, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and the Ogden Museum of Southern Art/ University New Orleans.

Entries must be postmarked by **March 15, 2011**. See <http://www.stopextinction.org/esd/194-esd-art.html> for rules.

Last year, more than 1,200 students, kindergarten to high school, from schools across the country, participated in the Endangered Species Day Youth Art Contest. Winners will be chosen in four categories: K-Grade 2, Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, Grades 9-12. From these, a national winner is selected. Local participants may display their work at the Antelope Valley Conservancy Nature and the Arts Exhibit, at Antelope Valley College in July.

Artwork should highlight one or more land- or ocean-dwelling endangered species found in the United States. Entrants are encouraged to depict species found in their region, ideally in the species' usual habitat. Entrants may wish to choose from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's *Spotlight Species* <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/>



***It's Getting Hot Out There: Top 10 Places to Save for Endangered Species in a Warming World***

<http://itsgettinghotoutthere.org/>



**Events and Classes at the Theodore Payne Foundation**

<http://www.theodorepayne.org/calendar.html>

## Register now for Youth Environmental Leadership Conference, Grades 3-12

Saturday, April 2 at Amargosa Creek Middle School, Lancaster  
Saturday, April 30 at Victor Valley College, Victorville

Students should download the application at <http://www.meeonline.com/students/yelc>

"What Happens When it Rains"



"Clean Air"



**Los Angeles County OHV Dialogue**

Minutes of meetings, workshops, and Draft Planning Guidelines are posted at <http://www.lacounty-ohv.org/site/LAOHV/LAOHVhome.aspx?SiteID=48>

**PLEASE SUPPORT OUR WORK**

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

- Please designate my donation to a nonwasting Sustaining Endowment.
- Please designate my donation for the AVTREC Trails Committee.
- Please note my donation in memory of \_\_\_\_\_
- My employer \_\_\_\_\_ has a match program.

Please provide newsletter by email (free)  no newsletter   
I am enclosing \$20  for one year subscription to newsletter by US Mail.

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

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

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

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

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

**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) 2/2011

**The Conservancy NEWS** 

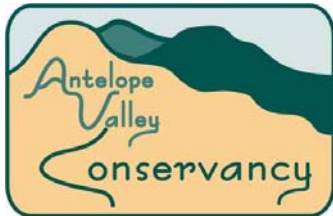
published by  
**Antelope Valley Conservancy**  
P.O. Box 3133, Quartz Hill, CA 93586  
(661) 943-9000  
[www.avconservancy.org](http://www.avconservancy.org).  
Wendy Reed, Editor

Subscriptions to our quarterly  
e-newsletter (by email) are free

Subscription by US Mail \$25 per year  
(not tax deductible)

**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.



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

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**



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



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



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