

Daley Ranch News

Friends of Daley Ranch

Winter 2012

Renewal—Fred Woods



Can you believe our wimpy winter is over? Well, not actually by the calendar, but certainly by my mid-western “the ground doesn’t thaw until April” memories. Our California version of a groundhog has been poking his nose out of holes around my unfrozen plants all winter. It seems he could care less if he sees his shadow, as long as he gets to eat.

I spent 5 months of every one of my 30 Michigan years trying to stay warm, knowing that nothing was growing outside but icicles. Calendar spring arrived around March 21st or so,

but the ground was still frozen. Growing things were only in my mind.

Yes, it’s only January and our wimpy winter is nearly over. Decorations and lights are put away, resolutions have been made and broken, weeds are growing and growing, and our native plants and animals are beginning their annual renewal. New growth is appearing on the Ranch making the hills and meadows green again. Have you noticed that the Ranch House renewal is almost complete? It’s supposed to open this spring. Hope to see you all there as soon as we know the date.

The Friends of Daley Ranch’s renewal project on the utility buildings is progressing, despite unexpected red tape. Our plans include fixing the creek bank behind the buildings before we start. Have you noticed that one building is already disassembled and in storage? That empty space will allow us access to fix the creek. Check out the new sign on the garage door.

Finally, the most understated renewal is your annual dues check. Our only reminder to you has been the spring newsletter. Until last year, all our newsletters were mailed and included an envelope for your dues payment. Since we went to an e-newsletter, it will be up to you to mail your payment in your own envelope. We still send paper newsletters on request. We are trying to save mail and print costs, and at least one or two trees worth of paper. Plus, the e-mail newsletter is in color, and usually can be found on our website at www.fodr.org.

Remember, we are an all-volunteer organization with no paid staff or office. Our public meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of every other month at 7:00 P.M., in the Escondido train depot in Grape Day Park. The first one this year is January 19th. All FODR members are welcome to attend. The Board also meets the other months at one of our homes for a potluck dinner meeting. As we enter the season of renewal, we hope you will continue to enjoy Daley Ranch in 2012.

Friends of Daley Ranch Contact Information

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City Contact Information

Hike Schedule
www.escondido.org/daley-ranch-hikes.aspx

Ranger Station
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Tracking Team
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Volunteer Coordinator
Sue Everts 760 839-4680

The Friends Have Concerns with Two City Proposals—Rick Mercurio

Huge annexation planned

The FODR board has compiled information and a map of the City's proposed annexation, one of the largest ever for Escondido, east of Daley Ranch. The board discussed potential impacts to the ranch, specifically edge effects and the effects to the wildlife corridor. The board had consensus on three initial concerns, which have been expressed to the City.

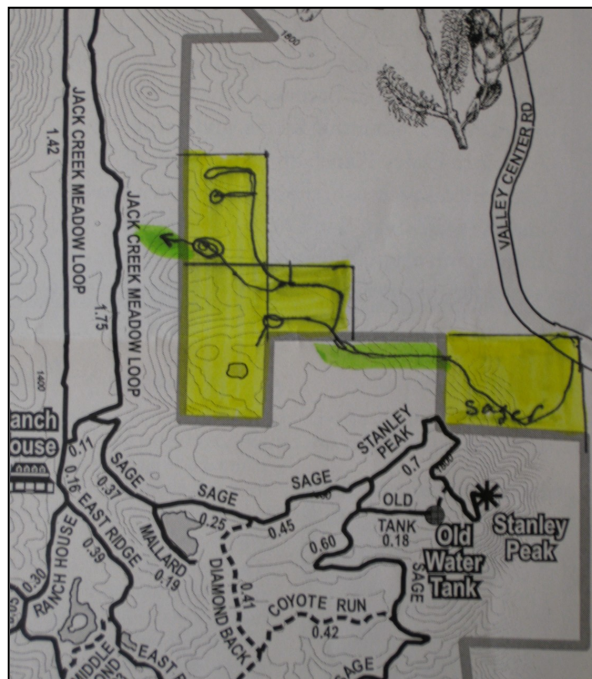
First, we feel that the City must follow through on a biologic/wildlife/habitat baseline study that was to have been established according to the implementation policies agreed to when the Daley Ranch mitigation bank agreement was signed with the wildlife agencies. Such a baseline document would allow the city to follow through on its obligation to monitor potential impacts to the conservation bank of all changes in the ranch and surrounding area. This includes the additional entry point to the ranch that is part of a large residential housing development proposal by Sager.

Second, we feel strongly that the City must mitigate all "edge effects" of any proposed developments adjacent to Daley Ranch. The most significant effect would be the proposed placement of a dense residential development, essentially a blockade, right in the middle of an active wildlife corridor that presently connects Daley Ranch to the open lands to the east.

Third, we are concerned about the proposed access road from Valley

Center Road to the Sager development. This road would pass through land that is now a part of Daley Ranch, just north of the Sage Trail. Such a road would surely impact wildlife passage and habitat.

The board also noted that a road could be built on the east side of Valley Center Road to connect to the Von Seggren property, which is also a part of the City's proposed annexation, near Lake Wohlford. Such a road would also present substantial threats to wildlife habitat and corridors in this area. The board plans to follow this annexation/development closely, and look for additional ways to communicate our concerns to the appropriate officials.



City water facility planned near Caballo Trail

The board discussed the City's proposed utility yard and structure in the vicinity of Caballo Trail.

The board agreed on the following concerns:

1. FODR would rather that the City did not build the new facility in that location. Aesthetically it does not make sense to house a large, industrial-type structure and yard next to the entrance to Daley Ranch's open space habitat.
2. Questions have been raised about the proposed facility's legality based on the permitted uses in that specific area.
3. FODR has expressed support for the Escondido Charros' ability to remain in that location, which is perfectly fitted for its equestrian theme.
4. If the City does build its facility, they must respect the Caballo Trailhead. Councilmembers have already said that the trailhead would not be jeopardized by the new construction and we expect them to keep their word. This is the most critical point for FODR.
5. The facility, if it is indeed necessary, must not interfere with Caballo trailhead parking for equestrian-related vehicles and the staging area must be maintained.
6. The City should strive to minimize the visual impact of this large, industrial-type facility.

The board noted that nearby residents of the Eureka Springs housing area have organized to oppose the City's plans. FODR plans to continue to work with the City to address our concerns.

Connecting to Nature—Rick Paul



California Grey Fox

On Thanksgiving morning I took a short hike up to Stanley Peak. There is a proposal before the City Council to build 100 homes just to the Northwest, and I wanted to get the lay of the land. Around 1990 the Council at that time approved a road easement on Daley Ranch to access this type of development. This road easement would be constructed as a full service City street. Curbs, gutters, storm drains. While walking on the current trail, which will become the street, I came across a California Gray Fox. You can see the three minute video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ExyHzKt4k6w>

This was presented to the City Council during oral communications on December 7th to illustrate our concerns about the wildlife corridor the Sager project threatens.

Progress on The Outbuildings

Have you seen our new sign?

“Friends of Daley Ranch

Historical Utility Building Restoration Project

The structures before you were originally important utility buildings when Daley Ranch was a thriving business. Time has taken a toll, and they are quickly deteriorating. The Friends of Daley Ranch has begun a restoration project to preserve this part of the ranch’s history. It will take lots of volunteer time, donated material and other resources.

To find our how to help, please visit our website: www.fodr.org.”



Project foreman Dick Althouse



California Holly—Irene O'Neill

The bright red berries and dark green toothed leaves of the Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) are clearly visible along most Daley Ranch trails this winter season, hence the nickname California Holly or Christmas Berry. It's said that Hollywood was named for this beautiful tall shrubby plant which used to cover it's adjacent hills. I love this particular plant so much that I planted two of them on our property to attract more birds and also have a spray for the holiday table centerpiece. Please remember that it's illegal and subject to fine to gather any part of this plant in the wild, but they are available at many local nurseries. The fruit of this member of the rose family is properly called a pome and contains a whitish mealy pulp with 3-6 compressed brown seeds. It is edible but slightly bitter without first cooking or soaking. Some Indian tribes pounded the berries into their pemmican to round out the nutritional value of the meat protein. Arriving Spaniards and other white settlers learned to enjoy a cider like drink made from soaking the fruit. Supposedly many fishing tribes used the bark in tanning their nets and sails and other tribes used a tea made from the bark to sooth stomach aches. While you're out and about the ranch keep your eyes open for this beauty and if you want a native plant garden make this plant one of the first you buy.

The mission of the Friends of Daley Ranch is to:

- Support the protection, maintenance, and restoration of the Daley Ranch Conservation Bank, native habitats and wildlife
- Promote education about the biological and historic value of Daley Ranch
- Encourage responsible recreational use consistent with conservation of native habitats and wildlife

Volunteer Opportunities

Contact Sue Evert at 760 839-4680 to volunteer for **Bike Patrol, Horse Patrol, or Trail Maintenance**

Hike Schedule

Call Ranger Station at 760 839-4680 for the hike schedule and also to sign up for a hike. The schedule is also available at www.escondido.org/daley-ranch-hikes.aspx

Go Green

Email daley ranch@yahoo.com with FODR in the subject line to get this newsletter electronically.

Friends Of Daley Ranch Membership, Renewal and Donations

Friends of Daley Ranch is a 501c(3) non-profit, organization.

Your tax-deductible contribution will be acknowledged by mail.

Make check payable to Friends of Daley Ranch and mail to
PO Box 461173, Escondido CA 92046-1173

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City/Zip _____

Email: _____ Yes, email my newsletter

This is for Membership Building restoration

New Member Continuing Member

\$15 Senior/Student \$35 Contributing \$50 Sustaining \$100 Corporate \$500 Benefactor \$ _____

My primary interests are: Conservation Recorded History Natural history Hiking Mountain biking
 Equestrian Use Other _____

Volunteer Opportunities: Newsletter editor Fundraising Building Committee Education Committee
 Recreation Committee Other: _____

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