

Hills For Everyone

Friends of the
Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor



Newsletter No. 51

Fall 2024

Vote to Save the Hills

Melanie Schlotterbeck



These lands are high on the Hills For Everyone list for acquisition. With a willing seller and Proposition 4, it may happen.

As allowed by law, Hills For Everyone's Board of Directors has endorsed three measures on the upcoming ballot: one statewide and two local. All will have a lasting impact on the hills. Learn more: <https://bit.ly/2024-Ballot-Measures>

YES Proposition 4 Statewide

A bond measure is a common tool used to fund major projects, in this case conservation projects. Proceeds from the bond sales would support safe drinking water, wildfire prevention, **protection of natural resources**, and preparing for the impacts of climate change.

The State of California has a goal to protect 30% of our lands and waters by 2030, called 30x30. We need funding to make this conservation goal a reality. **Proposition 4 also will make funds available to acquire and restore land in our area.**

Hills For Everyone will be able to complete the acquisition (45 years in the making) of nearly 800 acres it has been working on adjacent to Chino Hills State Park (CHSP). We also have our eye on saving the 3,000-acre Aera Energy lands that serve as the backdrop of north Orange County and southeast Los Angeles County. With Prop 4, both will be possible.

We urge a YES vote on Prop 4!

YES Measure PH Portions of LA County

The Habitat Authority (HA) manages ~4,000 wildland acres in the Puente Hills providing ranger services like fire patrol, removing homeless camps, and protecting wildlife. It was funded by landfill tipping fees until trips to the landfill plummeted due to the recession. When the landfill closed, funding stopped altogether well below the predicted amount.

Measure PH forms a Community Facilities District to establish a reliable revenue stream. Residents in Whittier, La Habra Heights, Hacienda Heights, Rowland Heights, and Workman Mill will vote on it. The HA would get a penny-per-square-foot in property tax. Homeowners would pay a very small amount yearly: the owner of a 1,500-sqft house would pay just \$15 a year.

The HA does not have access to federal funds and is NOT a part of a National Recreation Area. Without Measure PH, the Authority will need to further cut back on all services.

We urge a YES vote on Measure PH!

YES Measure JJ City of Yorba Linda

The State of California requires every city and county to have an adopted and certified Housing Element in its General Plan. Each jurisdiction is also required to plan for an assigned number of housing units. Yorba Linda's allotment came in high this cycle. The Housing Element on the ballot was crafted by a diverse team of residents from throughout the city.

Without a certified Housing Element, the State can inflict ongoing painful penalties like loss of state funding (for roads, etc.) and loss of local planning control. The State Housing Accountability Act (Senate Bill 330) allows Builder's Remedy to kick in. Under this tool, Yorba Linda would lose its ability to deny a housing project—or even have its zoning followed. This loss of local control could allow a four-story apartment building to be built in a neighborhood of single-family homes. Private open space adjacent to CHSP could become housing.

We urge a YES vote on Measure JJ!

Heli-Hydrants Coming Soon!

A new firefighting tool is being deployed across the hills. Strategically placed on hilltops and connected to a water supply, these heli-hydrants will provide a water source closer to the fire itself. This eliminates the need for firefighting helicopters to fly back and forth to distant lakes. These shorter distances will decrease the time it takes for them to refill their tanks.

Yorba Linda already has two heli-hydrants and another has been built in La Habra Heights. Two more are planned for Brea: one in Olinda Village and the other on the western side of town.



Yorba Linda Water District



Melanie Schlotterbeck

Reclusive Ringtail Found

An elusive ring-tailed cat (*Bassariscus astutus*) was recently spotted in CHSP by park employees. The ring-tail is not actually a cat, but rather a small member of the raccoon family. They are only active at night and therefore are rarely seen. With omnivorous appetites, these creatures change den sites often to avoid predators like raccoons, coyotes, and bobcats. Scientists have little data on their numbers, but they are a fully protected species. A new study in our area will better inform the status of their population in our hills.



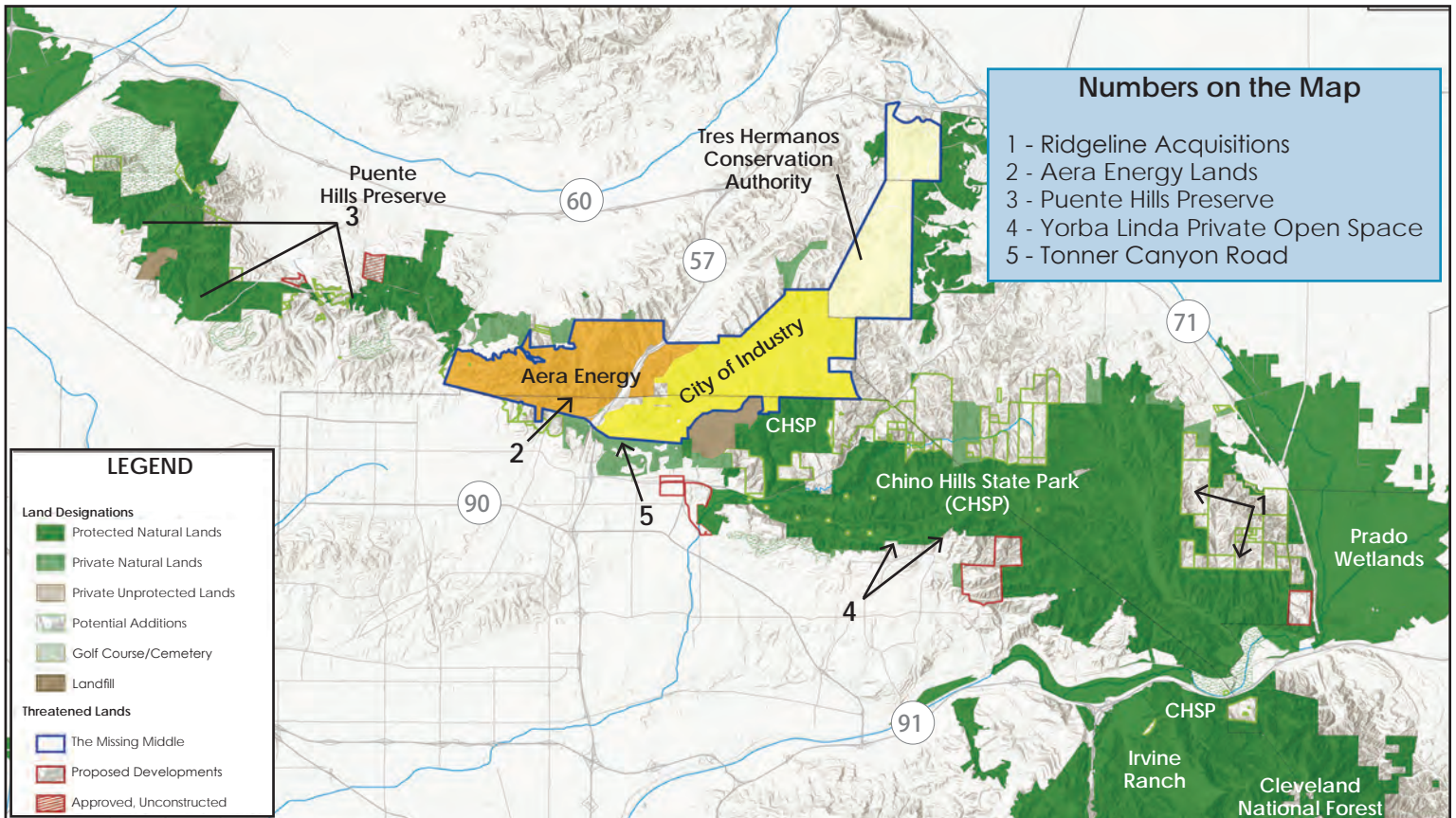
April Newlander

Important Wildlife Reminder

When we use the Park, we use it for pleasure—to relax, have fun, exercise. Wildlife use the park's natural lands as their home—to stay alive, to breed, and raise their young. They battle every day to secure adequate calories and avoid predators. Please respect their needs by obeying park rules and visiting only during park hours. Wildlife and the plants that sustain them need our active protection; without them, there would be no Park.



Mapping the Corridor Projects



An Interview with Josh Schroeder



We'd like to introduce you to our newest board member, Josh Schroeder of Yorba Linda.

How long have you lived in Yorba Linda?

My wife and I both grew up in Southern California, and we moved to Yorba Linda almost 13 years ago.

We arrived with a toddler and a baby on the way, and now my oldest is in high school! I love the connection to nature here. Yorba Linda has lots of mature trees and green spaces, all tucked in next to CHSP. My neighbors are coyotes, rattlesnakes, falcons, and owls—but at the same time we humans have great restaurants, an amazing library, and top-notch public schools.

What prompted your involvement in local government?

In 2021, I found out that an open space, privately-owned hill near my house and directly adjacent to CHSP, was under threat from development. I engaged with the city planning department to understand the project, learning about everything from the California Environmental Quality Act to Measure B to Public Records Act Requests along the way. We researched the history of the property, rallied our neighbors in opposition, collected signatures, and met with the City Council. In the face of our campaign, the developer pulled the project.



Diane Kanne

When did you first learn of Hills For Everyone and what was your impression of the organization?

During that effort in 2021, I was poring over a map of CHSP trying to understand what parts might be affected. I noticed that there was a "Hills For Everyone

Trail" and figured that it might be named for a local hiking club of some kind. One email to Claire turned into a great collaboration between Hills For Everyone and my neighborhood group. As I learned more about HFE,

I was amazed how diverse its projects were—appealing for systematic change at the state level, while at the same time helping small groups like mine defend a few acres of hillside. Four years later, I'm honored to have been named to the board and involved in moving those projects forward.



Hills For Everyone Archives

Why are you involved in getting Measure JJ passed?

After Measure Z failed in 2022, the City asked me to be part of a Resident Working Group because of my previous community involvement on housing issues. As the planning department gathered opinions from across the City to help improve its Housing Element, my north star was always "infill over greenfield development." This means developing already urban areas over natural lands. I care deeply about preserving natural



City of Yorba Linda

areas. When addressing mandatory State housing allocations, it's important that we do so in a thoughtful way that preserves the things we love about the City, and I feel Measure JJ does that.

Fundamentally, it's the alternative—Builder's Remedy—that worries me the most. Many privately-owned open space lands across Yorba Linda will be under threat if Measure JJ fails.

What's your most valuable lesson learned?

Community action really can make a difference! I've seen people from across Yorba Linda get involved in the process of developing Measure JJ. Hundreds of residents, concerned with everything from horse stables to fire evacuation routes, spoke at public meetings. Their inputs shaped the City's plan. Now, YL4LC.com has been created by some of those residents as a way to advocate for that plan, and I'm blown away by all the work they've put in supporting Measure JJ and opposing Measure KK. There are signs all over the City! I think it's amazing to see so many people come together to do the right thing.



Hills For Everyone



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Tonner Canyon Rd. Still Infeasible

With election season upon us, the same debunked proposal to build an alternative road to the Olinda Landfill via Tonner Canyon has resurfaced. The goal of the road proponents is to remove truck traffic on Imperial Highway in Brea. This gives residents false hope. The Tonner Canyon route has been proven infeasible numerous times and for many reasons. It not only would have to cross protected land that the City of Brea owns under a conservation easement, but it would also need to climb a steep slope traversing an earthquake fault, requiring massive and costly grading. And, most importantly, the Orange County Waste and Recycling Department has already made its final decision on access to the landfill. It did not choose Tonner Canyon.



Melanie Schlotterbeck

Get Involved

There are many ways to support HFE's work. In addition to these platforms, you can join our email list. We send out about one email a month and never sell, trade, or share our list. Subscribe on our website:



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