

Calendar of Upcoming Events

2007 Hike Season

The Sacramento Valley Conservancy offers docent-led educational hikes and equestrian rides at Deer Creek Hills Preserve (equestrians must have their own horse). We offer a diverse group of trained SVC docents that lead and educate participants on the natural history, geology, birds, wildlife, plant life, and wildflowers of the area. Hikes and Equestrian rides start at 9:00 and end at 1:00 (unless otherwise noted). All tours will be posted on our website soon. Please check back for additional events. There will be a fee for hikes of \$10, and \$20 for equestrian rides (unless otherwise noted). Children 16 and under are free. Our new interpretive trail will be open and free to the public on Fourth Saturdays from 9:00-1:00.

Hike Schedule:

Saturday March 17, Deer Creek Hills - *(FREE St. Patrick's Day Hike)*
 Saturday March 24, Wildflower Hike
 Sunday March 25, Equestrian Ride
 April 21, Kiefer Landfill Wetland Preserve - *(Led by Carol Witham)*
 Saturday April 28, Birds of Deer Creek Hills
 Saturday April 28, Wildflower Tour
 Sunday April 29, Equestrian Ride
 Saturday May 26, Natural History Hike
 Sunday May 27, Equestrian Ride *(TBD)*

For information about our events please contact our Outreach Coordinator, Kelly van Boxtel at (530) 400-5922, or kelly_sacvalleyconservancy@yahoo.com.

Announcements

National Trails Day - June 2, 2007

8:30am - 1:30pm

Join the Sacramento Valley Conservancy and REI at our newest local open space preserve and working cattle ranch, Deer Creek Hills, for a day of service. Help us in building and installing bird boxes around the 4000-acre property, constructing shade canopies around our parking and gathering area, and general maintenance at trailheads. All followed with lunch and a short, educational hike. Meet at the intersection of Stone House and Latrobe Road at 8:30. Please dress appropriate for the weather, and no open toed shoes.

Bring water, hat, gloves, and sturdy hiking shoes. Families and children welcome. For more information contact Tammy Mebane, Stewardship Director, 916.216.2178 or tammymebane@sbcglobal.net

Conservancy Wish List

We need this equipment for the hiking program and to start implementation of the Deer Creek Hills Master Plan. Donations are tax deductible. Contact Tammy Mebane, Stewardship Coordinator, at 916/216-2178 or tammymebane@sbcglobal.net, if you would be interested in donating or sponsoring any of these items or filling volunteer roles. Thank you!

**4WD vehicle, preferably a pick-up truck, Weed sprayers, backpack or truck mounted, Quad-runner vehicle
 Porta-potty service**



sacramento valley conservancy

East Sacramento County Update

SVC Receives First Donated Easement

Thanks to the generosity of the Isaac family, SVC's first donated conservation easement recorded in December 2006. The Isaac family donated a conservation easement on their 183-acre ranch just southeast of Wilton. This ranch contains native oaks, seasonal wetlands and is used for cattle grazing and horse-training.

The Isaac Ranch backs up to large areas of open grasslands, vernal pools and oak woodlands in the East Sacramento County area. As you head into the foothills on either Jackson Highway 16 or US Highway 50, you can view the rolling hills with waving grass (green or gold, depending on the season), native oaks, and cattle in the East Sacramento County area. Another great scenic drive is down Scott Road between Highway 50 and Jackson Highway 16.

The East Sacramento County area contains important local agricultural resources and habitat for raptors-including hawks and eagles, burrowing owls, endangered vernal pool plants and animals, and native oaks. Native Americans, ranchers and miners all have used this landscape and added to our local heritage.

Conservation donations like the Isaac Ranch conservation easement greatly help expand SVC's conservation work in



Native oaks bask in late autumn light at Isaac Ranch.

(See Isaac Ranch . . . page 2)

New Tax Benefits for Conservation Donations

Family farmers, ranchers, and other moderate-income landowners can now obtain a significant tax benefit for making the charitable donation of a conservation easement.

On August 3, 2006 the Congress approved an expansion of the federal conservation tax incentive for conservation easement donations. On August 17, the President signed it into law.

The new law:

- Raises the deduction a landowner can take for donating a conservation easement from 30% of their income in any year to 50%;

- Allows qualifying farmers and ranchers to deduct up to 100% of their income; and
- Extends the carry-forward period for a donor to take tax deductions for a voluntary conservation agreement from 5 to 15 years.

It is also important to note that this only applies to easements donated in 2006 and 2007, and that all potential donors must seek their own tax and legal advice.

The bill also includes sensible reforms that affect the appraisal process for all donated property and tighten the rules for easements on historic buildings. All land trusts and donors should make sure the appraisers they and their donors work with know about the new rules.

(See Donations . . . page 2)



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www.SacramentoValleyConservancy.org

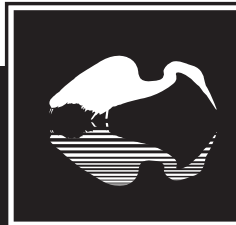
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Spring 2007

Leave a Few Thousands Acres to the Grandkids

If that sounds good to you, we've got just the way for you to pass on both your assets and your values. A bequest to the Sacramento Valley Conservancy means open space for everyone as long as life endures.

For example, designating SVC as a beneficiary of your IRA might fund a new trail through Deer Creek Hills. Maybe SVC could put your old life insurance policy to good use optioning a new property. Your own lot-sized piece of land might be leveraged to save a

family farm. Cash left in your will could plant the trees that will drop the acorns that will plant the trees that shelter the great grand children of your great grand children.

Please join our 2007 campaign to include SVC into 100 wills or other estate planning vehicles. Use the enclosed envelope to let us know if you'd like help getting started or that SVC is now included in your long-term plans. Be a partner in our commitment to protect your open space in perpetuity.

Isaac Ranch . . . *(continued from page 1)*

the East Sacramento County area, the location of the 4000-acre Deer Creek Hills Preserve. SVC continues to work hard with various property owners, including local farmers and ranchers, to both help them protect our local

heritage and meet their family needs. The new expanded tax incentive legislation enacted by Congress and the President in late August 2006 provides even more encouragement for landowners interested in preserving their land.

Donations . . . *(continued from page 1)*

Go to the Land Trust Alliance website at http://www.lta.org/publicpolicy/tax_incentives_resources.htm for more information on the new tax law.

We need your help! US Senate Bill 469, introduced by Senator Max Baucus, would make the new provisions

permanent. Please consider contacting your Congressional representative and senators to urge their support for this bill. There is almost always a way for constituents to send an email via their individual websites.

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Birders Enjoy SVC 2007 Outing Season

At the Deer Creek Hills Preserve, you can enjoy the view through bird scopes of acorn woodpeckers, red-winged blackbirds, hawks, many grassland birds, and, if you are lucky, maybe an eagle. Sign up now for the April 28 "Birds of Deer Creek Hills" docent-led hike. Check the back page for information on all of SVC's 2007 outings.



Building Partnerships

On February 24, SVC, Granite Construction and Eagle Scout David Golden, coordinated a service day to clean up at Deer Creek Hills. Demolition on an old section of the ranch corral, cleaning up old ranch debris and maintenance to the parking area all started early.

Abram Woodward, Plant Engineer for Granite Construction said, "We are really excited to be involved with SVC and the Deer Creek Hills Preserve. We are looking forward to coupling our expertise and resources to improve the public's experience at Deer Creek Hills."



Granite Construction and Eagle Scout work hard at Deer Creek Hills Preserve.

Deer Creek Hills Update

SVC continues to learn about the resources at the Deer Creek Hills Preserve with ongoing bird surveys. The updated 2007 winter-survey bird list is posted on SVC's website. The 2007 winter surveys found more great-horned owls using the preserve. SVC's docent-supervised access and youth programs are going strong. Youth trips are scheduled for 2007, including kids from Skylab Cottage Housing, Sierra Club Inner City Outings and California Middle School's Eco-Club. Our self-guided interpretive trail will open to the public on March 24, during times

when docents can staff the check-in station. Initially, the trail will be open during our fourth Saturday hikes. SVC is also excited to report that we are very close to the county initiating the environmental review process which will lead to adoption of the Deer Creek Hills Master Plan.

The first step will be release of a notice of preparation, then there will be a draft environmental impact report, then a final one. Public comment periods will apply during this process. SVC will post information on our website.

Donations Form

YES!

I want to make a difference and help create a legacy for the future and preserve Sacramento's beautiful open space, natural habitat and agriculture.

Here is my tax deductible donation of:

\$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000 Other

Name _____

Company/Title _____

Street _____

City _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Email _____

Fax _____

Contact me about: Planned Giving Becoming a Volunteer

Gifts to the Sacramento Valley Conservancy are tax deductible. If you would like more information, please call (916) 492.0908 or email us at www.sacramentovalleyconservancy.org



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THANK YOU.