



Puente Hills Landfill
Native Habitat Preservation Authority

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Avid Nature Lover, Gene Foley, Honored with Most Valuable Volunteer Award

This past Saturday, December 12, 2009, ***Gene Foley was recognized as Most Valuable Volunteer*** because of his almost 10 years of gracious volunteer service with the Puente Hills Landfill Native Habitat Preservation Authority (Habitat Authority).

Bob Henderson, Chairman of the Habitat Authority (and Mayor of Whittier) says, “Gene has been a big help for the Habitat Authority. His passion for the hills and dedication to education is tremendously appreciated and inspiring.”

Gene’s enthusiasm and love for the outdoors is readily apparent to anyone who meets him. With a background as a high school biology teacher, the transition to a Docent was second nature. Below is a snapshot of his volunteerism:

- He has consistently lead hundreds of local youth on nature hikes over the years. He and La Habra Heights local and fellow docent volunteer Judy Ennis were the first education docents for the Habitat Authority assisting with the Jr. Ranger Program. The Jr. Ranger Program is a multi-day in-class and outdoor educational program offered free to local schools involving hiking in the hills.
- His knowledge of wildlife and plants contributed to the development of the Habitat Authority’s docent training manual in 2007.
- Also in 2007, Gene coordinated installation of wildlife prints into a concrete Arizona Creek Crossing on the Arroyo Pescadero Loop Trail located off of Colima Rd. The artwork adds to visitors’ experiences of nature while on the trail. He used his expertise with helping to space and place tracks of coyotes, grey fox, deer, mountain lion, and bobcat – in such a way that each track can tell the story of a day-in-the-life of each animal and also serves as a learning tool to teach local youth about biodiversity using elements of scientific thinking, spatial thinking and symbolic thought.



- Gene continues to be involved with the Habitat Authority's newly developed outdoor educational Hills Alive program. The Hills Alive program offers hands-on learning with field trips to the hills. It is aligned with state science standards and is offered free to local schools and youth groups.

Gene's dedication continues with his presentations to local libraries about nature and with his commitment as President of the Friends of Whittier Hills.

The Puente Hills Landfill Native Habitat Preservation Authority (Habitat Authority) is a government park agency which manages 3,869 acres of hillsides in Whittier, Hacienda Heights and La Habra Heights. The Habitat Authority is dedicated to the acquisition, restoration, and management of open space in the Puente Hills for preservation of the land in perpetuity, with the primary purpose to protect the biological diversity. Additionally, the agency will endeavor to provide opportunities for outdoor education and low-impact recreation.

For more information about the Habitat Authority visit www.habitatauthority.org.

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