



**Puente Hills Landfill  
Native Habitat Preservation Authority  
10th Anniversary • 2004**

**The Habitat Authority is a joint powers agency with a Board of Directors comprised of representatives from the City of Whittier, County of Los Angeles, the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County and Hacienda Heights Improvement Association.**

**The purpose of the Habitat Authority is to acquire, restore, and maintain open space in the Puente Hills as permanent protection for the native habitat. As of March 2004, the Habitat Authority has acquired over 1,860 acres and overall manages 3,810 acres of preserved wildlands.**

## **T E N   Y E A R S   O F   A C H I E V E M E N T**

### **1994**

- Joint powers agreement creating the agency was signed by member agencies.

### **1996**

- First wildlands acquisition, Powder Canyon, 517 acres in La Habra Heights.
- First wildlands acquisition in Hacienda Heights, 63 acres located at the end of 7th Avenue.
- Entered into agreements with the City of Whittier and Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County to manage these agencies' preserved wildlands.
- Hired Rangers to manage the hills.

### **1997**

- Accepted first donated property. Mr. Benson Ford Jr. donated 8 acres in Hacienda Heights, along with \$20,000 to remove remnants of the home. Since then the Habitat Authority has contributed additional funding to restore this site with native plants to increase its biological value. Also, funding provided by a neighbor, George Hensel, allowed for the installation of a water guzzler, the first in the hills specifically designed for wildlife.
- Established a nine-member Citizens Technical Advisory Committee (CTAC) made up of representatives from the communities of Whittier, La Habra Heights, and the unincorporated areas of Hacienda Heights and Rowland Heights in Los Angeles County.

### **1998**

- First habitat restoration project in the hills began (15.7 acres, Arroyo San Miguel).

### **1999**

- Up to this date, purchased open space properties were 842 acres, bringing overall total of managed lands to 2,790 acres.
- Completed first Jr. Ranger Program, an outdoor educational experience offered at no cost to local schools and community groups.

### **2000**

- Hired first staff member, full-time Executive Director.

### **2002**

- Constructed and opened the Arroyo Pescadero Trailhead, Whittier. Entrance gate was designed by local high school students. Project construction was funded by Los Angeles County Proposition A.
- In addition to Habitat Authority funding, the Harbor Boulevard Wildlife Underpass project was funded by MTA and State TEA grants, totaling \$1.2 million. Co-applicants for grants were Los Angeles County Department Public Works and CA State Parks.
- Acquired the Turnbull Canyon wildlands, finalizing 9 years of negotiations.

### **2003**

- Hired staff Ecologist to help manage preserved wildlands based on ecological principles.
- Constructed and opened the Powder Canyon Trailhead in La Habra Heights, providing parking and a horse warm-up and cool-down ring for recreational enjoyment.

### **2004**

- In addition to Habitat Authority funding, the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy awarded a grant of \$231,739 for a portion of the construction costs for a trailhead at the end of 7th Avenue in Hacienda Heights, enabling design plans to move forward to completion.
- Hired third staff member, Administrative Assistant, to join management team.
- Total land purchased to date by the Habitat Authority is 1,862 acres, costing the Habitat Authority over \$26.6 million. Total preserved wildlands managed in the Puente Hills are 3,810 acres.
- To date, approximately 1,700 children from local communities have completed the Jr. Ranger Program.

## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- Construct a trailhead at 7th Avenue in Hacienda Heights in fall 2004 to provide recreational access for local residents to enjoy the hills. Install trailhead entrance gate to be designed by Los Altos High School students.
- Construct the Harbor Boulevard Wildlife Underpass which will strengthen the habitat linkage to the Chino Hills, thereby enabling the western Puente Hills to be more ecologically self-sustaining in the long term.
- Develop a Resource Management Plan and Trails Plan. The Resource Management Plan will act as the agency's master plan for preservation efforts. The Trails Plan will identify trails in the hills for people to enjoy.
- Develop a trail system and trail maps for people to navigate the hills more easily.
- Preserve more open space through land acquisitions – thereby protecting linkages between preserved lands, and creating buffers to core habitat lands.
- Continue to educate local children about the environment through the Jr. Ranger Program.
- Revegetate approximately 500+ acres with native plants by 2014, thereby increasing habitat for wildlife, increasing biodiversity, and promoting a healthier environment.


## THE HABITAT AUTHORITY

The Habitat Authority would like to thank the countless supporters, activists and volunteers who have helped preserve the hills. Also, the ongoing staff support from member agencies (Whittier City, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, and the County of Los Angeles) enables the Habitat Authority to dedicate maximum agency resources to hillside preservation and management. In addition, local and regional leadership support has enabled the hills to be preserved for the public benefits of clean watersheds, clean air, increased property values, enhanced quality of life, recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat and an overall healthier ecosystem.



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