PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
By Snowdy Dodson

As I travel around southern California, I drive distracted due to the horrendous weed problem that I see even as I am going at warp speed. This year tumbleweeds are making me crazy. There are too many of them and too few people preventing their spread. And as I traverse the streets and open spaces of Los Angeles and southern California, I am equally dismayed at the number of homeless people. Homelessness is a huge problem and carries over into all facets of our lives. Our open spaces are not immune - the Sepulveda Basin, the Los Angeles River, Tujunga Wash, and many other areas have been seriously degraded by homeless encampments.

OK, give me a second here while I make a connection. On Thanksgiving Day, I viewed a program on the PBS Newshour that reported on a project in Albuquerque, N.M. started by Mayor Richard Berry who has hired a non-profit that takes the homeless off the streets, feeds them lunch, and pays them to do clean-up work around the city. Viewers were introduced to hardworking homeless gathering up and disposing of tumbleweeds among other useful tasks. Why couldn’t this work here? Yes, the problem may be on a different scale in our area, but the homeless need help and the weeds need pulling. I emailed Mayor Garcetti about this idea – no harm in making the suggestion, right? Search Youtube using “PBS Newshour homeless New Mexico” or read the PBS transcript at http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/albuquerque-mayor-heres-a-crazy-idea-lets-give-homeless-people-jobs/ for the complete story. Our history shows that we can find creative solutions to multifaceted issues. Many of our parents and grandparents were caught up in the Great Depression and were in the Conservation Corp.; they worked and got fed, clothed and housed and eventually got back on their feet.

Switching gears from the sermonizing, I am pleased to announce that one of our CNPS Chapter Board Members, Steve Hartman, has been elected as the President of the statewide CNPS Board of Directors. When I interviewed him, Steve indicated that he would still be very involved in his local activities for our Chapter. After congratulating him, I asked Steve if there was anything that we could do to ease his work load as he serves his two-year term as state Board President. He answered that he could use help with updating our Chapter website; this would involve weekly updates to the events listings for the page, and he could also use assistance with planning and logistics for our annual fall plant sale. If you have an interest in helping Steve, please contact him via his email naturebase@aol.com.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS
of the Los Angeles/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter

JANUARY 12, 2016 – 7:30 - 9:30PM
SEPULEDA GARDEN CENTER
16633 MAGNOLIA BLVD. ENCINO

WHY ARE THERE SO MANY MANZANITAS?
Presenter: Tom Parker, Ph.D.
The California Floristic Province is the center of diversity for manzanitas (Arctostaphylos species, Ericaceae). They are the 'rock stars' of woody plant diversity in California. Ranging from the Sierra Nevada mountains to coastal bluffs along the Pacific, from temperate rainforests along the North Pacific Coast to arid mountain slopes in Southern California, a wealth of manzanita species and subspecies can be found in an astonishing array of environments. This presentation will introduce the diversity and evolutionary context, then focus on a few ecological processes that contribute to the evolution of this group, especially animal dispersal mutualisms and

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FEBRUARY 9, 2016 – 7:30 - 9:00PM
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
SANTA MONICA

WHY SO MANY OAKS ARE DYING IN THE DROUGHT
Presenter: Rosi Dagit
Four years of drought certainly has set the stage for high stress, but why are some oak trees okay and others not, in the same area? Oaks are incredible trees, well adapted to the drought cycles that are part of the local climate patterns. Using stored energy reserves, they can recover from complete canopy loss due to fire, and withstand the attacks of numerous insect pests and diseases. But clearly something has gone wrong. Even Grandmother Oak is showing signs of severe dieback.
In October 2015, biologists from the Resource Conservation District initiated a study to document the status of oak woodlands in Topanga State Park with the help of the Topanga Canyon Docents. Randomly selecting 25-meter plots in the area around Trippett Ranch, we tagged over 100 oaks and collected information on size, condition, understory vegetation, slope, and soils.

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Programs are free to the public. Refreshments will be served. For directions, see CNPS Programs on page 3.
RESTORATION

Coastal

Beach Restoration Volunteer Days
Malibu State Beaches
Every Sunday - 9am-noon
Beach restoration activities every Sunday at Malibu State Beaches. Come and enjoy a fabulous opportunity to get up close and personal with the pocket beaches. Call 213-481-8552 for info on which beach. (Leave your number S-L-O-W-L-Y and distinctly)"
(This is Mike O’Brien’s ongoing war on invasives and coastal sage scrub restoration. Always included is a tour of the amazing diversity that you can find if you look.)

Temescal Canyon Pacific Palisades Native Plant Garden
Temescal Canyon Park
Saturdays, Jan. 30 and Feb. 27 8:45am-noon
We’re just a few steps east of ~700 Temescal Canyon Road, Pacific Palisades, 90272 (between the PCH and Sunset Blvd., below Bowdoin St.). Community Service Credit. Contact Barbara Marinacci at barbara.marinacci@verizon.net or Michael G. Terry at michaelgterry@hotmail.com.

LAX Dunes Volunteer Days
El Segundo Dunes
Saturdays, Jan. 9 and Feb. 6 9am-noon
Help remove non-native plants. Free parking is available in the dunes. Enter through the gate across from Trask Triangle Park at the Trask and Waterview Streets intersection in Playa Del Rey, CA 90293. Please bring your own drinking water and snacks, and wear gloves, sun protection, closed-toe shoes, and long pants. Shelter and cold water refills will be provided. Please be on time and plan to stay until the end of the volunteer event as this is a secured area. Info: 818-782-9346.

Lower Topanga Park Restoration
Topanga State Park
Saturdays, Jan. 9 and Feb. 13 9am-noon

Inland

White Oak Farm Volunteer Days
Malibu Creek State Park
Sundays, Jan. 24 and Feb. 21 8:45am-noon
Join Mountains Restoration Trust, TreePeople, and the California Native Plant Society as we revisit restoration sites so beautifully planted in past years. Come see the growth of a natural ecosystem of natives in what was once a field of fire-prone weeds. Bring hat, water, snack, sturdy shoes. Gloves and tools provided. Receive community service credit. Reservations required: www.mountainstrust.org (818)591-1701 x203.

Restoration
Silver Lake Meadow Native Garden
Saturday, January 30 and February 27 9:00am-11:00am
Help weed, water, mulch. Bring hat, water, weeding tools. Meet at the Garden at the north end of the Silver Lake Meadow Park near Armstrong Ave. & Silver Lake Blvd. Street parking on Silver Lake Blvd. Info: meadownativegarden@silverlakenc.org.

Return of the Oak Woodlands
Malibu Creek State Park
Saturday, Jan. 23 and Sunday Feb. 7 8:45am-noon

Habitat Restoration
Cold Creek Valley Preserve
Sunday, Jan. 10 and Saturday, Feb. 6 8:45am -noon
Help weed, water, and mulch native plants for a restoration project in the Cold Creek Valley Preserve. Bring snack, water, and sturdy shoes. Gloves and tools provided. Receive community service credit. Reservations required: www.mountainstrust.org

FIELDTRIPS

SAT 1/16 - 8:45 am – 3:30pm
Caballero Canyon & CSUN
Bryophyte Walk and Workshop
Start at Caballero Canyon (near the south end of Reseda Blvd across the street from Country Club Pl.) meeting at 8:45 to collect in the field. Bring a hand lens and brunch. Continuing at CSU Northridge, 3rd floor of Chaparral Hall 5335 (parking $6) at 12:45 with microscopes. Led by Kirsten Fisher and Paul Wilson. All are welcome to attend one or both events for an introduction to the local mosses. If raining, meet at 8:45am at CSU Northridge for work in the lab and with microscopes.

SAT 2/20 - 8:00 – 10:00 am
Malibu Lagoon State Beach
Beach and wetlands bird watching and botanizing. Parking for a fee in the beach lot or for free on Pacific Coast Hwy (PCH). Meet in the parking lot at the corner of PCH and Cross Creek Rd. in Malibu. Noted birder, Scott Logan of Wild Wings Backyard Nature in Sherman Oaks, will lead a birding adventure for all levels. The group will also enjoy the newly planted lagoon vegetation. Bring binoculars, water, snacks, hat, good walking shoes, layers appropriate for the weather. Contact Snowdy Dodson 818-782-9346 or snowdy.dodson@csun.edu for further details. Rain cancels.

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TUES 1/12  7:30-9:30PM  
Sepulveda Garden Center, Encino  
WHY ARE THERE SO MANY MANZANITAS?  
Presenter: Tom Parker, Ph.D.  
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response to wildfires. Important characters to aid in keying this beautiful group will be highlighted.
Tom Parker is Professor of Biology at San Francisco State University where he's been employed as an ecologist since 1980. His investigations community and evolutionary ecology focused on the dynamics of plant communities: chaparral seed banks, tidal wetland dynamics, seed dispersal of tropical trees, mycorrhizal ecology of forests and chaparral. He was the lead author for the treatment of Arctostaphylos in the Flora of North America and the 2nd edition of the *Jepson Manual*. He has served as president of the California Botanical Society.
Directions: the Sepulveda Garden Center, 16633 Magnolia Blvd. in Encino, is on the north side of Magnolia between Balboa & Hayvenhurst. Park in the lighted lot at the east end of the garden, walk west along the path to the garden center building. Refreshments are served. A no-host dinner precedes the meeting at 6:00 pm at Tony Roma's Restaurant, 16575 Ventura Blvd., Encino. (818-461-8400)

TUES 2/9  7:30-9:00PM  
First United Methodist Church, Santa Monica  
WHY ARE SO MANY OAKS DYING IN THE DROUGHT  
Presenter: Rosi Dagit
Oaks located at Topanga Elementary and Manzanita School are also being monitored. Rosi will provide information on how interested individuals could start monitoring their own trees or trees in other park areas.
Rosi Dagit is a Senior Conservation Biologist and certified Arborist with the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains. Originally trained by Jo Kitz, Rosi has spent many years studying our local oaks.
Directions: The First United Methodist Church, 1008 11th Street, Santa Monica CA 90403, is one and a half blocks north of Wilshire Boulevard on 11th Street in Santa Monica. From the 10 freeway, exit at Lincoln. Go right, or north to Wilshire. Turn right. In three blocks turn left on 11th Street. The church is on the left, just past California. Church parking is on the right under an apartment complex. The Fireside Room is at the north end of the church's large patio, next to the Sanctuary. Refreshments are served. A no-host dinner precedes the meeting at 5:45 pm at El Cholo Mexican Restaurant in Santa Monica at 1025 Wilshire Blvd.
For info about the above program, please see “Upcoming Programs” on front page.

CHAPTER BOARD MEETINGS  
February 2, 7pm  
6117 Reseda Blvd. Suite H, Tarzana  
(north of Oxnard/Topham, on west side of Reseda), one block from the Orange Line Busway on Reseda Blvd. Steve Hartman's office. Join board members for dinner at 6:00pm at Garden Wok Restaurant at same address. Members welcome!
Chapter Conservation Update
November and December 2015

The Los Angeles/Santa Monica Mountains chapter geographic sphere of influence includes a wide range of land uses and watershed conditions such as highly urbanized areas and pristine canyons. Development pressures in our area are ongoing and increasing, in part due to population density, desirable location, and a strengthening local economy. We work diligently and collaborate with others for sustainable policies, environmentally sensitive projects, and holistic planning principles. Your local knowledge shared with us makes our chapter a stronger voice in the community. Share your ideas and news: conservation@lacnps.org

Chapter Advisory Involvement

Green Waste Policy
The Chapter continues to advise regulators and permittees at both State and local levels. Biomass waste is the largest stream that enters the waste cycle. Burning, which constituted a former primary means of disposal has been outlawed for several years due to regulatory standards and targets for air quality and greenhouse gas emissions.

Los Angeles River Restoration
Various reaches of the River and tributaries are part of ongoing and new restoration activities. The Chapter helps advise, plant, and maintain many of the areas, especially at locations in the San Fernando Valley. Community participation, leadership, and grassroots 'ownership' at each River restoration site is necessary to sustain and ensure success over time. Contact us if you would like to organize a neighborhood group committed to working with us and adopting one of the many areas planted along the River.

Phytophthora Control
Phytophthora sp. is a genus of soil borne pathogen that wreaks crown and root rot in native plants commonly problematic in agronomics. This disease can deleteriously alter species composition in affected native plant communities. The large scale increase of and demand for native plant propagation as material for landscaping and restoration imposes increased susceptibility for spread of the pathogen to native plant communities. The Chapter is working closely with State CNPS and State agencies to develop policy and best management practices for native plant growers, retailers, and non-profit groups that offer native plant sales.

Proposed Developments

Centennial master planned community - Tejón Ranch
The Chapter is monitoring the planning and permitting processes involved with this new city located east of the junction of Interstate 5 and State Highway 138 between Santa Clarita Valley and Bakersfield. It is the largest single housing development ever proposed in California. Developers tout the 11,700-acre project as a 'sustainable self-contained community' of 23,000 homes. It is located in the pristine bioregion and wildlife corridor of the intersection of the high Mojave Desert plains, San Emigdio, Temblor, and Transverse Ranges.

Hidden Creek Estates – Browns Canyon, Chatsworth
The growing contingent in opposition of the equestrian estates awaits Notice of Determination for development by the lead permitting authority, the City of Los Angeles. The project site abuts protected open space, part of a documented critical wildlife corridor, and within the sphere of the proposed federal Rim of the Valley Corridor (see below). In December, our CNPS Chapter filed an appeal to the City Planning Dept.'s recommendation to approve the project.

Above, Hidden Creek project site.
City of Los Angeles Mansion Ordinance Revision
The Chapter will attend public hearings and submit commentary regarding the ordinance, which, where permitted, has contributed to loss of mature vegetation, increased impervious surfaces, storm water runoff, and eliminated established wildlife habitat throughout the City. The existing ordinance allows full build-out of lots and results in degradation of community and habitat values.

Newhall Ranch – Santa Clarita Valley
A landmark California Supreme Court decision was handed down in December, after months of deliberation, upholding claims against the project and State wildlife officials with regard to greenhouse gas emissions and protected species. The judgment is a blow to groundbreaking of the 20,000 housing units located on 12,000 acres along the pristine and wild Santa Clara River corridor.

Rondell Oasis Hotel – Las Virgenes Road, Calabasas
The Chapter submitted public comment to the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the five-acre project located near the junction of US 101 and Las Virgenes Road. Reviewers challenged the project proponent and lead permitting authority’s decision the development does not require full environmental review. The parcel, albeit partially disturbed, is within a major wildlife corridor, hosts at least three native plant habitat types, has the potential to host over 30 listed flora and fauna species, has water features that serve as tributaries to the Malibu Creek Watershed, and is adjacent to a historic trail. The proposed development will impact 100% of the soil and grade into the hillside, above which is sage scrub and chaparral habitat.

Santa Monica Mountains Vineyard Development Zoning – North Area
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted in November to limit new vineyards in the 32-square mile area to two acres per parcel and prohibit planting on significant ridgelines or hills with a slope of more than 33 percent. Best management practices that protect native plants and wildlife for new and existing vineyards are part of the ordinance, along with strict compliance and reporting requirements. A 200-foot buffer must be established between the crop and any sensitive habitat or areas, including riparian zones and water features. All fencing must be wildlife-permeable. The Chapter submitted comments and recommended native plant and wildlife-friendly Best Management Practices to the Board for their consideration.

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) – Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, Imperial Counties
The 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy will be reviewed and commented on by the Chapter. Efforts will be combined with the Orange County CNPS Chapter, which was appointed by SCAG as State CNPS representative to the project.

Sullivan Canyon Mansions – Brentwood
The Chapter and local community await determination about required environmental review for this 12-acre project located in blue-line old growth riparian woodland that supports wildlife in the 20,000-acre upper watershed. Los Angeles City Zoning Hearing Officer listened to public testimony in June from a full room, including our Chapter. The development is for two 30,000-square foot homes that will underground the stream, remove existing habitat and 87,000 cubic yards of hillside. The developer removed over 100 Quercus agrifolia (coast live oak) on the property in autumn 2014 without public notice and over the permitted amount in the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project.

Golden Weed Wrench Award Goes to Chapter Board Member Bill Neill
The California Invasive Plant Council presented their Land Manager of the Year award during the recent Cal-IPC symposium in San Diego. Bill earned this coveted plaque for his exceptional contributions to invasive plant management and the protection of California ecosystems.

As a licensed herbicide applicator, Bill has worked for 32 years to control invasive and exotic trees in wildland areas. Initially he organized volunteer groups to remove tamarisk/saltcedar from desert springs and riparian areas; since 1999 he has worked mostly in coastal watersheds as a self-employed contractor (his company is called Riparian Repairs).

Bill has volunteered a lot of time and has tackled projects such as eliminating castor bean from the Sepulveda Basin.
Chapter Election Results
Thanks to all of you who voted in our recent election and also to those who agreed to run for office. Our 2016 officers are:
Snowdy Dodson, President;
Halli Mason and Betsey Landis,
Co-Vice Presidents;
Beth Olson, Secretary;
Steve Hartman, Treasurer.

Chapter Officers:
President
Snowdy Dodson
(818) 782-9346
snowdy.dodson@csun.edu

Vice Presidents
Betsey Landis
(310) 472-0624
betseylandis@sprintmail.com

Halli Mason
(818) 345-6749
hmason@sbcglobal.net

Secretary
Beth Olson

Treasurer
Steven Hartman
(818) 881-3706
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CHAPTER RENEWALS & NEW MEMBERSHIPS
Send check to David Hollombe, 6223 San Vicente Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90048 or to CNPS, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816.

Current CNPS memberships are:
Student, Limited Income $25,
Individual $45,
Family, Group or Library $75.
Make checks payable to CNPS.

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Write or phone David Hollombe (323) 934-0332. Include your e-mail address. Be sure to notify State CNPS Office, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816.