

ACONA Meeting Notes

March 23 2021

Note: All links and email addresses are in the Resources tab of the ACONA website.

Group Homes in Altadena

Gina Peck-Sobolewski, VP Residential Services, Hathaway-Sycamores Child and Family Services

Hathaway-Sycamores Sycamores was founded in 1902: First orphanage in Pasadena; merged with Hathaway in 2005. Provide a wide range of services in behavioral health. Focus on the whole person. Ten locations. El Nido campus (2933 N. El Nido Dr.) serves Altadena/Pasadena. Short-term residential therapeutic program service males 11-7 years old; 43 beds. Average stay is 5-6 months. Most attend PUSD. On-site 24/7 crisis support program. Transitional Shelter Care program for males 6-18; 16 beds. Short-term program ~ 10 days. Have an open line of communication with neighbors to follow up if questions or issues arise.

Elizabeth Gonzalez, LMFT, Chief Program Officer, CCR Five Acres

Incorporated in 1888. Oldest residential facility in San Gabriel Valley; served 45 boys when founded. Located at 760 W. Mountain View St. There are 440K foster children nationally (60K in California). Goal is to get kids into foster homes as quickly as possible. Have therapeutic and short term programs similar to Hathaway-Sycamores. Permanency is main goal (children in a permanent family, preferably their family of origin). Serve both female and male clients. Website: 5acres.org. Calls to law enforcement: mandated to make a call anytime a child is out of their view (runs away, for example). Try to work collaboratively with the community if there are issues.

Q: For the runaways, is there a trend as to where they run? A: Elizabeth: Some run to a family member. Some just leave to hang out at a park, then they come back. Some end up very far away. No one specific area, no one size fits all. Gina: Youth in congregate care don't have any freedom, not even the supervised/restricted freedom of kids their age who are not in care. Even if they just want to go hang out, they are classed a runaway.

Trail Access and Crowding during Covid

Zachary Likins, LA County Trails Planning

Social media has contributed to increased trail use. Covid also played a factor. Eaton Canyon: increased use led to restriction of access (environmental considerations — preserving balance of nature, natural resources, habitat protection—and social distancing concerns). March 3: Held a community listening session to obtain feedback for how to reopen after the pandemic restrictions are lifted. No changes are proposed to current reservation system at present. Processing feedback to provide to executive management; will prepare a draft plan to present to the community for further feedback. Email eatoncanyon@parks.lacounty.gov if you have input or questions. Website: trails.lacounty.gov.

Q: Could there be a trail system-specific management plan? A: It's being brought up to management.

Q: Cross-town trail connector. A: Trying to fill in gap in Rubio Canyon trail system. Agency doesn't have much influence to get easements where there is private property. Continuing negotiations with private property owners. Also working on Skyline gap. Goal is unbroken trail from Eaton Canyon to Hahamonga Watershed Park.

Q: How can the community work with County on trail issues? A: Future volunteer programs are in the works to identify and work with stakeholders.

Q: Update on trail reopening? A: All the county trails except the reservation system ones (Eaton Canyon, e.g.) are open. Eaton Canyon's restrictions will probably also be loosening up.

Jonathan Gonzalez, Sr. Civil Engineering Assistant, LA County Public Works
Traffic mobility and safety. Parking restrictions: handle requests for restrictions (handicapped, no parking, temporary restrictions...). Coordinate with Sheriff's department for enforcement. Public safety is the primary concern. Parking restrictions for trail heads also affect residents who might want to park there. Temporary parking restrictions due to park closure will be lifted when the park reopens. Email: jogonzalez@dpw.lacounty.gov.

Q: Why is there no trail parking on Pinecrest Drive when there's plenty of space? A: Restrictions were put into force some time ago. Two-hour restriction is for short weekday hikes. County is looking at that restriction right now.

Q: Is anyone monitoring the condition with cars parked illegally in trail access areas? Blocking emergency vehicles. A: Law enforcement has power to cite and tow vehicles parked illegally. Comment from Lt. Skaggs: There will be another enforcement operation soon, as volunteers are vaccinated.

Wildlife: Bears in Altadena

Rebecca Barboza, Wildlife Biologist, California Dept of Fish and Wildlife, South Coast Region
Her specialty is large mammals. American Black bear was historically located only in Northern California; they now occupy all mountainous areas. Bear population has steadily increased over the last 30 years. No current population estimates for the San Gabriel mountains; doing a study now. In the urban interface bears give birth to more cubs (up to five total) because of increased food supply. Bears don't hibernate in Southern California, but they go through a period of torpor. Bears go from less than a pound to 250-500 pounds in five years, and live for 25-30 years. Urban bears are "food-conditioned" bears — rely on human food sources. Her department is the steward agency for wildlife. Strongest message: Never Feed Bears! (It's against the law.) Website: www.wildlife.ca.gov

Q: Do urban food gardens attract bears? A: Bears are attracted to anything that's edible.

Q: Concerned about coyotes that break into trash or that people are feeding. A: Animals become habituated to people when they see them as food providers. The community needs to act as a whole to prevent habituation. Coyotes, raccoons, skunks are all species that can become habituated. When you provide food for one, you are providing food for other species.

Q: Cougars? Any sightings? A: There is one radio-collared mountain lion (SGF1) that comes to Altadena every once in a while. Seems to like the 210 corridor. There's another one that a home camera picked up — not collared — but seen in the same area. Mountain lions may travel and be seen during the day, but hunt only at night, so keeping livestock and pets indoors at night will protect them.

Q: Sick dying wildlife: what is done? A: If you're seeing this, email Rebecca (rebecca.barboza@wildlife.ca.gov). Her department needs to keep track of these.