



**SAN BERNARDINO
MOUNTAINS
LAND TRUST**

Forest View

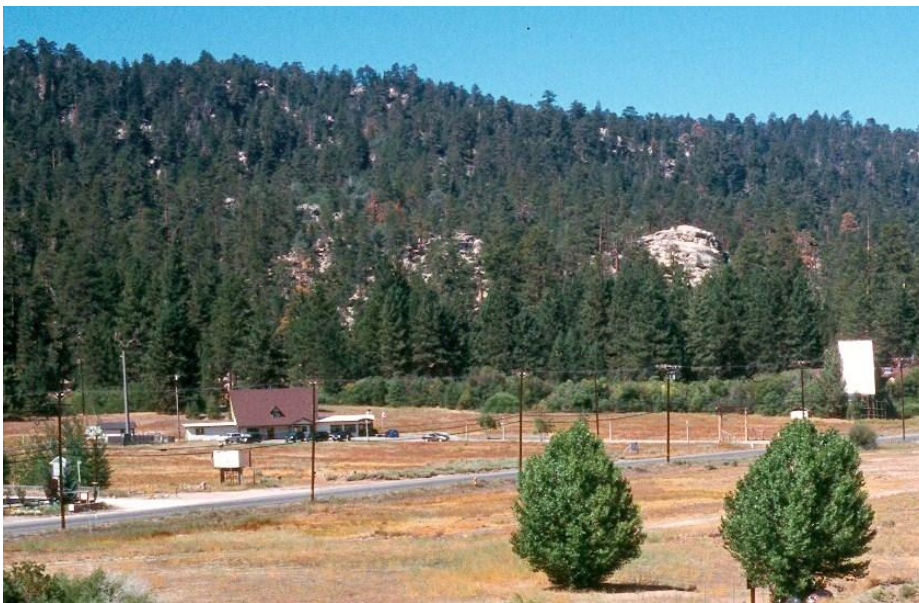
December 2015

Dedicated to acquisition of forest open space & wildlife habitat on private land in the San Bernardino National Forest to ensure lasting public benefit of the natural mountain environment

Big Bear's best meadowland saved

32 acres with lakeshore & old drive-in movie site purchased by SBMLT

IN two separate land deals funded by the state Wildlife Conservation Board the **SAN BERNARDINO MOUNTAINS LAND TRUST** purchased a total of 32.3 acres of critical meadow and wetland habitat on the south shore of Big Bear Lake. The site features several unique endangered plant species, most prominent being the Bear Valley checkerbloom --found only in Big Bear Valley. Equally important the acquisition protects a vital patch of open space within a familiar populated part of the community.



The old drive-in site (with real estate office) plus the lakefront parcel across the highway were both acquired by the S.B. Mountains Land Trust in 2015.

Quality of life enhanced by open space

Keeping visually attractive open space in a community is the best way to not only protect ecological integrity but also to enhance livability, celebrate the unique character of a place and boost overall property values. Meadows and open views of lakes particularly uplift one's spirits.

This \$3 million acquisition was made possible by congressional funds obtained by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and matched by our state Department of Fish & Wildlife. The property has long been recognized as a key link in Bear Valley's ecological system. SBMLT (thanks to your support) was able to successfully bring all these elements together.



One-time real estate office at the site

Future Education Center

In coordination with the Big Bear Valley Education Trust, SBMLT's current plans are to convert the old Spencer real estate office on Metcalf Meadow into a children's education and nature center.

Depending on fundraising capability, a decision will be made whether to keep and restore the existing building or to tear down the aging structure and replace it with an all new upgraded facility. The surrounding meadowland area will be enhanced with interpretive trails and informational displays for the children as well as the general public.



Wetland habitat on the lakefront site



SBMLT property scouts

SBMLT is a community-based charitable nonprofit organization dedicated to buying threatened forestland for greater conservation and long term protection of the San Bernardino Mountains.

SAN BERNARDINO MOUNTAINS LAND TRUST

2015 Board of Directors

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Heidi Fron	Sandy Steers
Ed Wallace	Kevin Kellems
Peter Jorris	

2015 STAFF

Peter Jorris, Executive Director
Kevin Kellems, Projects Manager

SUPPORT TEAM

Membership	Pat Huckaby
Website	Polly Sauer & Heidi Fron
Correspondence	Sandi Huckaby

SBMLT CONTACT INFORMATION

Phone the Executive Director at
909-867-3536 or
E-mail: info@SBMLT.net
WEBSITE: www.sbmlt.net

HELP SUPPORT

The SAN BERNARDINO MOUNTAINS LAND TRUST

MAIL your donation *with the FORM* below

- or - visit our website to make an online gift at www.sbmlt.net

Your Membership is Key to continued Success!

The Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your contributions are tax deductible.

My contribution is:

☐ Forest Supporter (\$35)
☐ Mountain Guardian (\$50)
☐ Mountain Hero (\$100)
☐ Forest Champion (\$500)
☐ Other Donation (\$)

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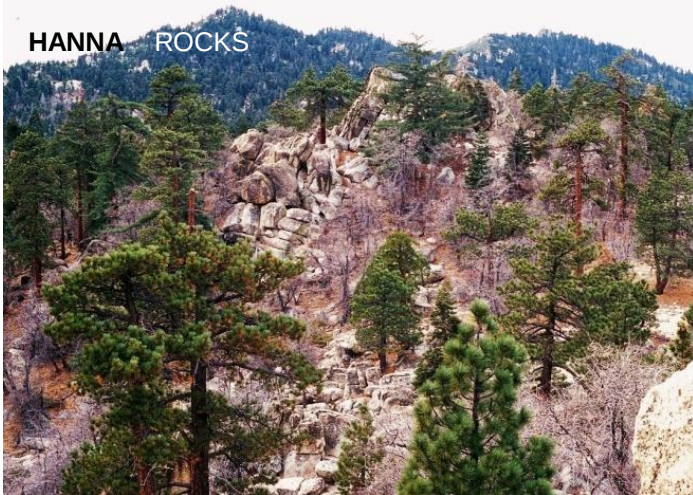
Join the LAND TRUST (or renew your support) with a generous contribution today

San Bernardino Mountains Land Trust PO Box 103 Fawnskin, CA 92333 **-or-**
 PO Box 490 Lake Arrowhead, CA 92352

2015 Land Acquisition Progress

The Lost Lots of Hanna Rocks

One more of the stray Hanna Rocks lots was donated to SBMLT in 2015. In partnership with the county, SBMLT is seeking to acquire the final 85 of 560 miniature lots that were subdivided on 40 acres in the middle of nowhere 100 years ago. This long forgotten site is fully surrounded by National Forest and accessed only by the most remote and primitive dirt road.



Hanna Rocks, where inaccessible and unusable lots need to be acquired and added to the surrounding public forest

Deep Creek Consolidation Project

Deep Creek, a spring-fed rivulet starting at Snow Valley Ski Resort, is a full size stream as it passes by the town of Arrowbear, where a half-mile of the creek got included in the 1926 Arrowbear subdivision. However, all the early dirt roads in the flood channel vanished long ago. Now these Deep Creek lots have no access or utilities.



Fly fisherman casting for rainbow trout in Deep Creek

Most lot owners bought their piece of land sight-unseen at some auction sale. Upon finding out what they own, they often stop paying their property taxes. After 5 years, the county can re-sell tax-delinquent land at public auction. SBMLT works to buy these lots, so that this part of Deep Creek can become fully protected. This year we got 4 lots at the county auction and one more lot from a Canadian investor, who was ready to cash out of a bad investment.

One-acre Parcels Adjacent to Coyote Rock

Next to SBMLT's 140-acre Coyote Rock Preserve are forty 1-acre lots, 12 of which were part of our original acquisition.



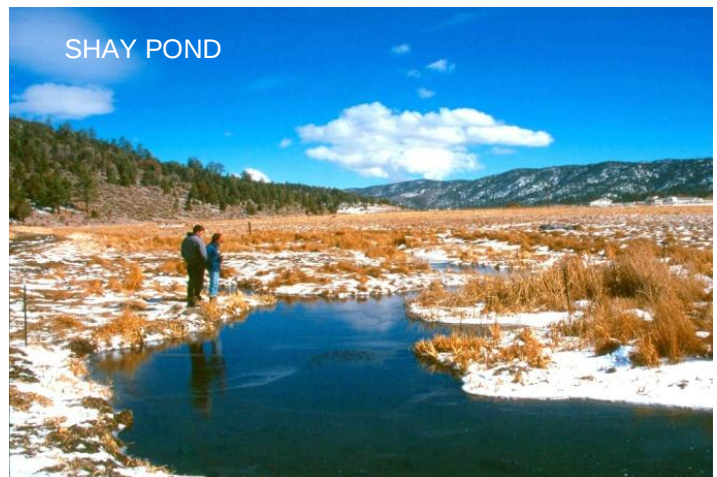
Trail workers at SBMLT's popular Coyote Rock Preserve

Another 6 parcels were bought shortly after from 2 owners, who were glad to do a bargain sale with SBMLT. We then received a donation of a one-acre parcel from a generous Land Trust supporter, while also buying another 1-acre lot at the county's tax sale auction. This year in 2015 we were contacted by a longtime lot owner willing to sell his acre for \$7000. That purchase was fortuitously funded by loyal SBMLT members who donated half the amount, while the other half was graciously matched by the Mountains Group of the Sierra Club.

The Unarmored Three-Spine Stickleback

Shay Pond is the last remaining habitat for the unarmored three-spine stickleback, a tiny endangered fish indigenous to the Baldwin Lake region. SBMLT is partnering with the state Department of Fish & Wildlife (DFW) to help buy land protecting the critical surroundings of this rare species.

In 2015 SBMLT purchased five properties adjacent to the pond, using funds from the state Wildlife Conservation Board. The DFW has been building support for this project ever since the 1980s.



University of Redlands Biologist, Tim Krantz, and SBMLT Projects Manager Kevin Kellems viewing the fish

Restoration Work at the Pebble Plain Preserve



SBMLT Projects Manager, Kevin Kellems, works with volunteers to put a large rock in an illegal road.

PREVENTING VEHICLE TRESPASS

The SAN BERNARDINO MOUNTAINS LAND TRUST has devoted much of its time in 2015 to managing the boundaries of the Big Bear pebble plain property, cleaning up trash, eliminating illegal vehicle trespass and improving hiking access. The east boundary in particular was subject to rampant incursions, and the public road (an unmaintained county dirt road) that parallels our east line had been diverted 100 feet into Land Trust property. Relocating that public road, called Needle Lane, back into its proper right-of-way was one of our major achievements this year, thanks to the help of neighbors and volunteers.

Moonridge neighbors especially were instrumental in mobilizing local support for the pebble plain preserve and devoting significant time each week to monitoring and restoration work. Random vehicle tracks have been covered over with slash or blocked with logs, tree stumps or rocks. Needle Lane's alignment has been secured by steel post and cable fencing and strategically placed boulders.



Leftover tree stumps are used to block trespass routes

RECLAIMING PRIME NEGLECTED LAND

The Big Bear pebble plain preserve at this point in time consists of a 300-acre Forest Service parcel plus SBMLT's adjoining 165-acre site on the south. Next to be hopefully acquired is a 240-acre parcel abutting the L-shaped Forest Service land on the NE. These lands have lain neglected for 15 years. The USFS parcel was long landlocked by the two adjacent properties, which were originally intended for development. Therefore landscape abuse was not deemed a big concern. Thus trash dumpers, off-road vehicles, tree cutters and campfire partiers all took advantage of the non-enforcement. Since taking ownership in 2014, SBMLT has hauled out 50 pickup loads of trash, while gradually eliminating most of the trespass routes and access points. Incidents of abuse are steadily being reduced.



Over 150 volunteers helped clean up the site on August 28, 2010

LEGENDARY CLEANUP PROJECT

When first formed in 2010, the Pebble Plain Coalition saw that illegal dumping activity on the east perimeter of the Forest Service site was a serious problem that must be dealt with. So a major cleanup was spearheaded by the Big Bear Valley Trails Foundation back on August 28, 2010. Over 150 volunteers tackled a decade of accumulated trash on a 50-acre patch of the future pebble plain preserve west of Sugarloaf. Forty tons were removed, including 6 cars, 2 boats, 1 motor home and countless old couches. The forest cleanup included volunteers from the Big Bear Valley Trails Foundation, San Bernardino National Forest Association, US Forest Service, AmeriCorps, Big Bear Mountain Resorts, SoCal Broncos, Big Bear High School, Lindley Log Homes, and Big Bear Disposal. It has become one of the most legendary volunteer cleanups in mountain lore.



LAND TRUST NOTES and NEWS



NEW PLAQUES ADDED TO DONOR WALL



In 2015 there were 11 more flagstone carvings added to the Land Trust's one-of-a-kind Donor Wall at Arrowhead Ridge, a monument to our idyllic forest and an excellent way

to show one's appreciation for the priceless value of these mountains. The commemorative donor wall is a lasting testament to our gratefulness.

ONGOING STEWARDSHIP

As SBMLT takes on more land management, we are now balancing dozens of challenging projects from cleanup and tree planting to trail construction and fuels reduction.



SBMLT exhibit boards show many of the restoration and ongoing improvement projects at Arrowhead Ridge.

2015 EVENTS at SBMLT PRESERVES

The Lake Arrowhead Chamber of Commerce was proud to host 2 of its Special Olympics gatherings at Arrowhead Ridge and the Strawberry Peak Preserve --inspirational forest settings rescued from once controversial development projects.



Kevin Kellems leads hikers

The annual Pine Cone Festival was also held this year at Arrowhead Ridge in October. Many hikes too were enjoyed on SBMLT trails. The Mountaintop Hiking Club and Sierra Club led expeditions at Arrowhead Ridge, Strawberry Peak and Coyote Rock. The Big Bear Ecotourism Coalition led tours at Metcalf Meadow and the Villa Grove Pebble Plain in summer. Sixty girls from the "Every Girl Counts" program spent an afternoon on the Will Abell Memorial Trail in October. Ed Wallace also led field trips for 6th-graders to the pebble plain preserve.



Ed Wallace leads eager students from Every Girl Counts (a Soroptimists-sponsored program) on a hike into the forest

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The San Bernardino Mountains Land Trust was pleased to welcome three new members to its Board of Directors in 2015. They are Ed Wallace and Sandy Steers from the Big Bear area and Heidi Fron of Lake Arrowhead. Since a large part of SBMLT's focus has been centered on Big Bear lately, it is especially valuable to now have stronger representation from that community.

Sandy Steers has been a prominent conservation advocate in the Big Bear area for 15 years. Ed Wallace recently received special recognition from the Big Bear Rotary Club for his broad community service. He has also been active in getting the Sawmill Pebble Plain area protected. Heidi Fron recently moved to Lake Arrowhead from Oak Glen, where she worked for the Wildlands Conservancy, a key benefactor of SBMLT. Our two land trusts have been working together for twenty years. These new members bring a welcome diversity of new talent to the SBMLT Board.



Volunteers repair the Strawberry Peak entry

Photo Credit: Dave Ficke for the two hiking pictures on this page and Scott Secombe for the others. Thanks



Upper Deep Creek Watershed in the Arrowbear area

SBMLT Photo



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