



MEET YOUR DOCENTS (L-R) **Christie Withers**, Docent Trainers **David Sneed** and **Jodee Bennett**, **Carolyn Huddleston**, **Jan Ojerholm**, **Seth Souza** and **Megan Thomas**.

Five adventurous volunteers have completed the Natural San Luis Docent Training Program, organized by ECOSLO and funded by the Community Foundation of San Luis Obispo. Docents will join hikers throughout the City's Open Spaces to share historical, biological and geological knowledge, as well as information about open space conservation.

A new website for the Natural San Luis Docents was launched last month. Check out [slo-docents.org](http://slo-docents.org) for information about Docent volunteers, the hike schedule, and the City's Open Spaces. Docents will also share their experiences through the blog. ECOSLO plans to offer more trainings in the future. If you would like to be a Natural San Luis Docent, please call ECOSLO at 544-1777.

MEET OUR NEW ECOSLO STAFF MEMBERS

ECOSLO welcomes Judi Young (L) and Adria Arko to our staff! Program Coordinator **Adria Arko**, originally from the Bay Area, moved to SLO for a Master's in Public Policy at Cal Poly. Adria is also a member of the SLO Food System Coalition. Membership Coordinator **Judi Young** has over 20 years of marketing experience in the Bay Area and San Luis Obispo, and currently serves on the board for the local chapter of the California Native Plant Society. Judi and Adria are excited to bring their enthusiasm, dedication and experience to ECOSLO.



# Come, Experience the Great SLOutdoors...

With ever-increasing greenbelt properties and our amazing partners helping to build new hiking and biking trails in City Open Space, we are able to travel further away from the built environment and experience the quiet bliss of the outdoors. With this comes a greater need for planning your outing.

Make sure you have water, a first aid kit, and some way to signal for help if there happens to be a problem. Be aware of what is around you. In addition to such natural hazards as uneven terrain, rattlesnakes and poison oak, mountain lions have been seen in City Open Spaces. In most instances, if you encounter a large predator in the field, do not run, as running can provoke the animal to charge. Hiking in a group is safest, as your voices tend to make animals avoid you.

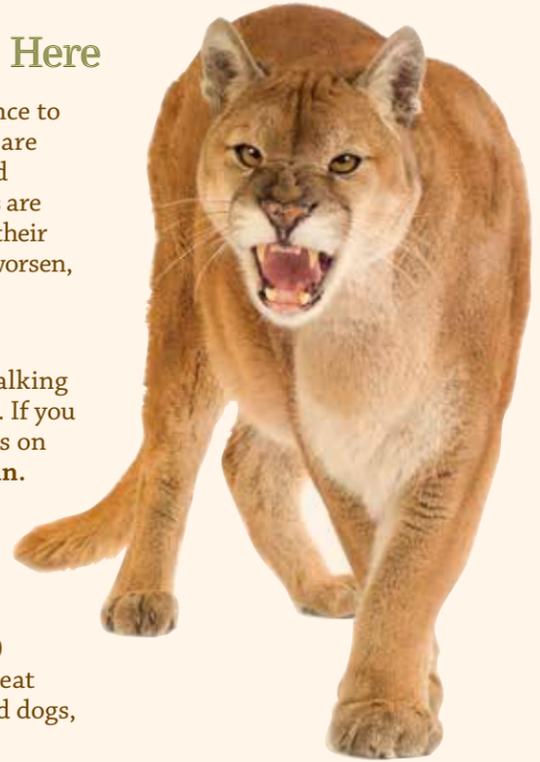
We plan to deploy more game cameras to track wildlife on our Open Space properties, to be more informed about what animals are moving through which areas at what times during the year. As we get reports of larger animals in a particular area, we will post the location to ensure you have an enjoyable experience in our beautiful backyard.

## Mountain Lions Live Here

It's unlikely you will have the chance to see a mountain lion, because they are mostly nocturnal and usually avoid human contact. Attacks on humans are very rare, but as more people enter their territory, or as draught conditions worsen, the chances increase.

If you venture into mountain lion habitat, go in a group or carry a walking stick. Keep children and pets close. If you see a mountain lion, keep your eyes on it and back away slowly. **Do not run.** Raise your arms and yell so the lion knows you are not prey. If a mountain lion attacks, fight back.

Mountain lions can grow up to 160 pounds and eight feet long. Lions eat mule deer, raccoons, stray cats and dogs, and other small animals.



NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
SAN LUIS OBISPO,  
CALIFORNIA  
93401 PERMIT #40

**SLO STEWARDS**  
Environmental Center  
of San Luis Obispo  
Post Office Box 1014  
75 Higuera Street, Suite 100  
San Luis Obispo, California 93401

ADDRESS SERVICE  
REQUESTED

# SLO STEWARDS

SPRING 2015 • VOLUME 20, NUMBER 1

## FROOM RANCH OPEN SPACE NEW TRAILS, NEW EXPERIENCES

When the City of San Luis Obispo first acquired Froom Ranch Open Space, it could be a challenging place to visit and recreate, despite its natural beauty.

*Froom Ranch before:*  
Steep, rocky,  
dusty and dry.

*Froom Ranch today:*  
Gently sloping trails  
meandering beside  
canyon creeks in the  
shade of oaks along  
carefully constructed  
paths with bridges,  
steps and scenic views.

In the SLO Stewards Winter 2013 edition, we reported on new trails in the Irish Hills and the outstanding work of the City's Rangers, the Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bikers, and our many dedicated and skilled volunteers. A year later we have even more great work to report, including one of the most difficult and technical trail sections ever constructed in City Open Space. In order to make a fun, flowing experience through the old Froom Mine, the trail features a stacked rock-walled slope, as well as the Old Prospector's Trail, which features hand-built rock stair sections that allow passage up a steep and dramatic canyon, rivaling those found in Yosemite.

Under the City's agreement with the Bureau of Land Management, we are poised to put the capstone piece on all of it, by extending the trail system to the top of the ridge where views of the Pacific Ocean, Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes, and Pt. Sal can be seen in the far distance – I can hardly wait!

BY **BOB HILL**  
NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGER  
CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

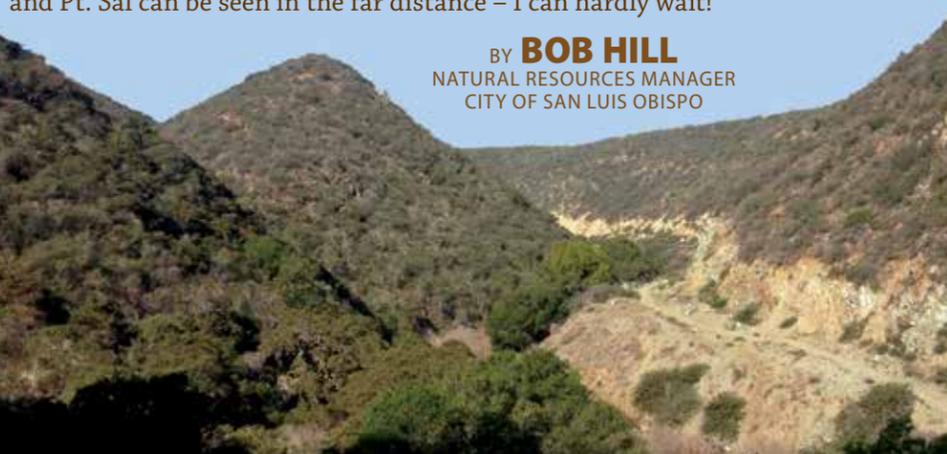
## “Wednesday”



BY  
**DOUG CARSCADEN**  
LEAD RANGER  
PARKS & RECREATION  
CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

The City of San Luis Obispo is beyond lucky to have a dedicated crew of very skilled trail building volunteers from the Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bikers who come out EVERY Wednesday. Conditions don't matter to this group of hardy Open Space enthusiasts.

It can be 95° or raining and they are there, ready to work (not always with a smile) – and work they do. This group of trail building warriors performs all tasks related to trail construction – from moving 250+ pound boulders to anchor a grade reversal, to artfully building bridges and switchbacks to make them look and fit the natural surroundings. This group is a joy to work with, if you've got tough enough skin to hack it – and the Rangers do. Therefore the City of San Luis Obispo would like to thank these volunteers for their tremendous efforts in Open Space enhancement by naming three sections of trail in the Irish Hills Natural Reserve “WEDNESDAY” in their honor – in all about 1.9 miles of sweet multi-use single track trail.



Froom Canyon from Old Prospector's Trail



## Natural San Luis DOCENT-LED HIKES

SLO-DOCENTS.ORG

### JOHNSON RANCH

FEB 15 11am Jan

### RESERVOIR CANYON

FEB 21 9am Seth

### IRISH HILLS (Madonna)

FEB 28 9am Carolyn & Megan

### RESERVOIR CANYON

MAR 7 9am Christie

### STENNER SPRINGS

MAR 14 9am Carolyn

### SOUTH HILLS (Woodbridge)

MAR 14 9am Seth

### BOWDEN RANCH

MAR 28 9am Seth & Megan

### TERRACE HILL

APR 11 9am Megan

### RESERVOIR CANYON

APR 12 9am Jan

### JOHNSON RANCH

APR 25 9am Seth

### IRISH HILLS (Madonna)

MAY 2 9am Jan

### IRISH HILLS (Prefumo Canyon)

MAY 9 9am Jodee & David

### STENNER SPRINGS

MAY 30 9am Jan

## SLO City Parks RANGER-LED HIKES

### RESERVOIR CANYON

FEB 8 1pm

### CERRO SAN LUIS

MAR 15 1pm

### FROOM RANCH (Home Depot)

APR 19 1pm

### JOHNSON RANCH

MAY 10 1pm

## Volunteer TRAILBUILDING

### ISLAY HILL (Sweet Bay)

FEB 21 9am-12pm

### FROOM RANCH (Home Depot)

MAR 14 9am-12pm

### JOHNSON RANCH

MAR 28 9am-12pm

### FROOM RANCH (Home Depot)

APR 11 9am-12pm

### BOWDEN RANCH (Lizzie St)

APR 25 9am-12pm

### STENNER SPRINGS (Stenner Rd)

MAY 9 9am-12pm

### CERRO SAN LUIS

MAY 23 9am-12pm

**HIKES** Please wear sturdy shoes and bring water. Hike length varies with group.

**TRAILBUILDING** Please wear long pants and sturdy shoes. Tools, water and snacks provided.

**INFO** Heavy rain cancels hikes and trailwork. City Ranger 781-7302 or ECOSLO 544-1777



## ABOUT

DISTANCE 3 miles

TYPE Loop

ELEVATION CHANGE 500 ft

OPEN TO Hikers, runners, bikes, dogs on leash

FEATURES Views, creek, seasonal waterfall, wildflowers, wildlife

CAUTIONS Rocky, unshaded

ADDRESS Madonna Road at Devaul Ranch Drive

TRAILHEAD COORDINATES 35.254311, -120.69525

"Nice view at the top of the loop.

Very few people on this trail. There are a lot of different paths to take."

~ Sheila Niemi



# Froom Creek Trail in the Irish Hills Natural Reserve

Four years ago, when we asked for donations to purchase the Froom Ranch property, hundreds of you responded.

Thank you!

Today, volunteers are working with City Rangers to construct trails on Froom Ranch and throughout our Open Spaces. Join us on the trail!

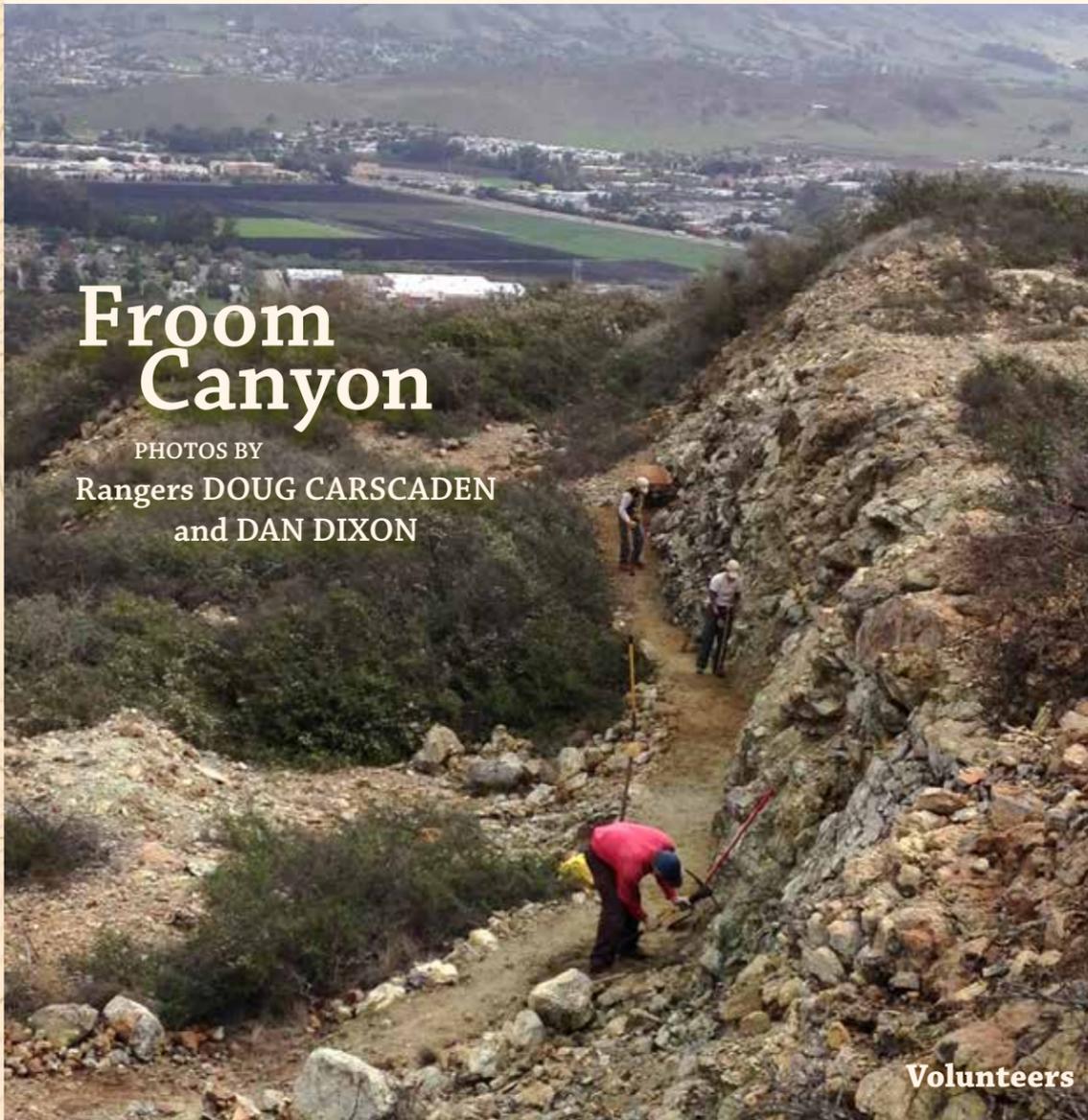
Froom Creek Trail follows an old dirt mining road around the mountain, then heads up the canyon alongside Froom Creek before climbing Canyon View trail. At the top you'll find great views of Los Osos Valley and the morros, from Islay Hill to Hollister.

Take King trail east along the ridge for a faster descent, or north and then east on Mariposa for a more gradual return to the trailhead. An extra one mile loop around Froom Ranch gives you wonderful views of downtown San Luis Obispo. Happy hiking!



## SAFETY

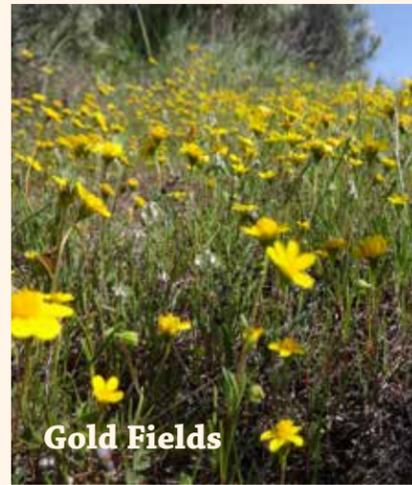
- Stay on designated trails
  - Dogs must be on a leash
  - Pick-up after your dog
  - Pack it in, pack it out
  - Camping and fires prohibited
  - Smoking prohibited
  - Do not remove flowers, rocks or other natural features
  - Open from dawn to dusk
- INFO: Ranger Service 781-7302



# Froom Canyon

PHOTOS BY  
Rangers DOUG CARSCADEN  
and DAN DIXON

Volunteers



Gold Fields



Chinese Houses



## TRAILHEAD DIRECTIONS

City of San Luis Obispo Open Spaces

### BISHOP PEAK @ Patricia

To reach the trailhead, take Foothill Blvd west and make a right turn at Patricia Drive. Continue north on Patricia Drive. Trailhead is on the left just past Patricia Court.

### BOWDEN RANCH

Take Johnson Ave south, then left on Lizzie Street (opposite French Hospital). Lizzie ends at a split rail fence that marks the beginning of the trail.

### CERRO SAN LUIS

From Higuera Street, take the Marsh Street onramp to 101S, but turn right onto Fernandez Road just before entering the freeway.

### FELSMAN LOOP

Meet at Patricia Drive trailhead. From Foothill, turn north onto Patricia Drive. Trailhead is on the left, just past Patricia Court.

### FROOM RANCH @ Madonna

Take Higuera Street south, then a right on Madonna Road and follow it to the end. Trailhead is at the far side of the roundabout, up the walkway.

### IRISH HILLS @ MADONNA ROAD

To reach the Madonna trailhead from Hwy 101, take Los Osos Valley Road north towards Los Osos. Turn left on Madonna Road and follow it to the end. Find parking on the street, then walk up the dirt road to the trailhead.

### IRISH HILLS @ PREFUMO CANYON

Take Los Osos Valley Road north. Turn left on Prefumo Canyon Road. Follow for 1 mile. Trailhead is on the left after the bridge crossing.

### ISLAY HILL

Take Broad Street south, turn left on Tank Farm Road. Make a right onto Wavertree Street. Turn left on Spanish Oaks Drive, then right onto Sweetbay Lane. Trailhead is at the end of Sweetbay Lane.

### JOHNSON RANCH

Take Higuera Street until it turns into South Higuera Street. Park at turnout located at the intersection of South Higuera Street and Ontario Road. Trailhead is on the right, just off the freeway.



### LEMON GROVE LOOP

From Higuera Street, take the Marsh Street onramp to 101S, but turn right onto Fernandez Road just before entering the freeway. Lemon Grove Loop is on the Cerro San Luis Natural Reserve.

### RAILROAD RECREATION TRAIL ALL ACCESS

Meet at the SLO Railroad Station at the south end of Santa Rosa Street (Amtrak station).

### RESERVOIR CANYON

Take Highway 101 North from San Luis Obispo. About a mile past city limits, turn right on Reservoir Canyon Road. Trailhead is at the end of Reservoir Canyon Road. Park to the left.

### SOUTH HILLS @ EXPOSITION DRIVE

From US 101, exit Madonna Road and go east. Take a left on Higuera Street and a quick right onto South Street. Turn right onto Exposition Drive and look for the South Hills Open Space sign on the right hand side of Exposition Drive, at Corrida.



CITY OF  
SAN LUIS OBISPO  
OPEN SPACE TRAIL  
TOPO  
MAPS

Miles of mountain biking and hiking trails traverse the City's 3,500 acres of open space and parkland, making outdoor adventures a wonderful part of everyday life on the Central Coast.

Download pdf TOPO MAPS showing trails, elevations, and features such as creeks and roads by aiming your smart phone at the QR code below. Or go to <http://bit.ly/slospaces>