



# General Meeting Details Threatened Future of Area Oaks

Oak trees have inspired, sheltered and fed creatures for centuries. Whether growing from small acorns or being felled by small strokes, the oak has been an important symbol in literatures and cultures.

But now the oaks in San Diego County are being seriously threatened from several fronts. One of the most recent and most serious attacks is the gold spotted oak borer (GSOB). This borer, found initially about 2005 in the Cleveland National Forest near Descanso, has spread widely in east county forests, and according to an article from the Union-Tribune, 20,000 oaks in the back country in the past ten years have died as a result.

The gold spotted oak borer is a slender beetle about the size of a grain of rice with six golden yellow, paired, linear spots on its dark wings. However, the borer is rarely seen, even by researchers. The larvae are also difficult to detect as they live and feed under the bark of certain oaks in the important cambium

layer at a average depth of one inch from the outer bark surface. That is the layer beneath the bark which brings water and nutrients to the tree. However, the presence of the larvae is signaled by a dark staining and sap flow on the bark called "patch kill" which is the best way to determine an infestation of GSOB.

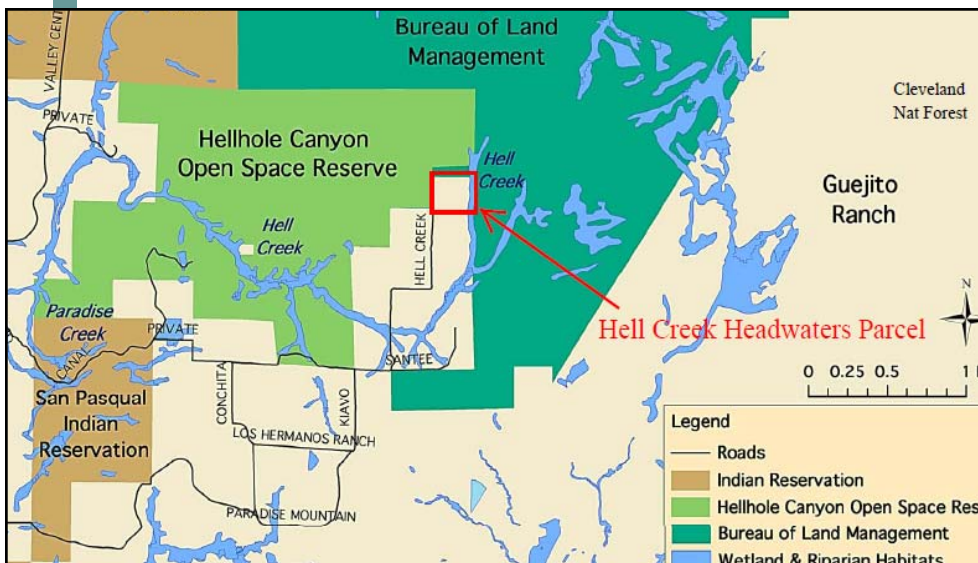
When the larvae have completed feeding they pupate to metamorphose into an adult beetle. The adults emerge from D-shaped exit holes about 1/8 of an inch in size, another telltale sign of a GSOB infestation.

**Hellhole Canyon General meeting Saturday, January 29 at 10 AM in the Community Room at the Valley Center Library.**

Crown thinning and discoloration, branch die back, and premature leaf loss are signs of infestation. Old-est trees are attacked first, down to trees with an 8" diameter trunk. The coast live oak, canyon live oak and California black oak are most severely affected. The Englemann will also host this pest, but seems less vulnerable.

*(See Oak Trees continued on page 3)*

## Hell Creek Headwaters Parcel Added to the Preserve



*34-acres of creek, meadows, foothills to be conserved, wildlife corridor enhanced!*

After a long process, including two public hearings, at which the County Board of Supervisors approved MSCP mitigation funding to the project, with our local supervisor Bill Horn leading support, escrow has finally closed on the 40-acre Hellcreek Headwaters parcel located at the North East corner of the Preserve.

"A key link protecting wildlife and habitat connectivity of the Preserve to

*Friends and County Parks collaborate to add 34- acres of the Hellcreek Headwaters parcel to the Preserve.*

*(See Hellcreek Continued on page 3)*



Friends of Hellhole Canyon  
Open Space Preserve  
PO Box 221  
Valley Center, CA 92082  
Website:  
[www.hellholecanyon.org](http://www.hellholecanyon.org)  
760 749-5320

The Hellhole Canyon gazette  
is published quarterly, in  
Valley Center, CA.

#### Board of Directors

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Board of Directors Meet-  
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**The Friends is a non-  
profit land trust and en-  
vironmental education.  
We are dedicated to pro-  
tecting natural open  
space at the Preserve  
and in our community.**

County of San Diego Parks  
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Hellhole Canyon:  
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Ranger  
Nick Sloan, Ranger  
Offices at Wilderness Gar-  
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Phone (760)742-1631  
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## Friends' Calendar and Activities

### *Friends Meetings*

The Friends hold public general meetings once per quarter. The meetings feature an educational program on some natural or environmental topic and committee and officer updates.

The Friends' 2010-2011 calendar is posted on the website,  
[www.hellholecanyon.org](http://www.hellholecanyon.org).

For up-to-date info on events and activities check  
[www.hellholecanyon.org](http://www.hellholecanyon.org).  
Click on Current News.

### *Docent Led Hikes*

Hikes are led monthly on every 3rd Saturday, 9am from the Preserve parking lot. For information call us at 760-749-5320 or visit our web-site at  
[www.hellholecanyon.org](http://www.hellholecanyon.org)

For a great and safe hike, we suggest you bring the following: lots of water, hat, sunglasses and sunscreen, long-sleeved shirt and pants, sturdy hiking shoes, snack foods, binoculars, camera, tails guide books. Please note that the Preserve can get warm and then hot quickly compared to the earlier morning start times. Be Safe and See you there!!

### *Volunteers, Board Members Sought*

Volunteers are needed to help with projects with the

Friends. Are you a good organizer? Know how to mail merge? Can you write grants? Willing to join a committee of neighbors to help out here and there? Please volunteer with the Friends. We have a place for you and need your help. Call 760 828-0726 for more info and to get started.

Are you interested in helping to provide leadership and contributing to the growth and development of our organization? Then please consider joining our Board of Directors. Our board is composed of regular community residents. You are qualified by your interest in protecting open space and outdoors recreation. Please call or email Rick at 760 828-0726, [landavaz@cougars.csusm.edu](mailto:landavaz@cougars.csusm.edu) for more info or to discuss how you can help the Friends. We need you! Don't be shy!

### *Join Friends Email List*

Visit [www.hellholecanyon.org](http://www.hellholecanyon.org) and click on join email list and receive updates and reminders of upcoming events and news.

**Kaina, the Snow Dog, needs a home!!** Friends member Susan Fajardo is looking for an adoptive family for

Kaina, a sweet 5-year-old pure-bred husky. Adoption to preapproved good caretakers only! Call Susan, 760 749-0803.



Friends President Rick Landavazo led members of the Girl Scout Troop 4476 on an interpretive hike through the Preserve on October 16th. The Troop learned about native plants, their special adaptation to drought conditions and about the different kinds of sages and Manzanita plants in the Preserve. The Friends offers a docent-led hike each third Saturday of every month, except August and December.

*(Hellcreek, Continued from page 1)*

open space lands to the east has been preserved!” said Friends president Rick Landavazo, once the acquisition was made final. The Friends Board of Directors worked tirelessly with County Parks staff, the property owners and the community to assure conservation of the land expanding the conservation footprint of the Preserve and creating new hiking and trails opportunities.

The 40-acres has been subdivided so that the undeveloped pristine 34-acres could be added immediately to the Preserve. “Because of the long relationship of trust and collaboration we have nurtured with the County Parks staff we were able to work out complexities surrounding the acquisition” Landavazo explained. The 34-acre subdivision was paid for with County MSCP funds, the remaining 6 acres, which contains a home site, outbuildings and an orchard, was acquired by the Friends. Plans to convert the home site into a nature and community center have been put aside due to the high costs of use-permitting and road maintenance. According to Landavazo, the Friends have always operated out of their members’ home and can continue that for now. The home site will be put on the market as a single family residence and will replenish the Friends’ acquisition fund so that they can respond to future conservation opportunities. “It is a good example of the government collaborating with local residents and community organizations to preserve open space for wildlife, our rural atmosphere and quality of life,” Landavazo said.



A view of Rodriguez Mountain from the Hellcreek Headwaters Parcel

*(Oak Trees, Continued from page 1)*

The gold spotted oak borer can kill 90% of trees in an area in less than ten years. Local trees were believed to have been previously protected by surrounding deserts but imported firewood from Arizona is believed to be the source of the current infestation.



Oak trees will only survive if we fight for them! Planning and conservation can save oak trees. In this melancholy scene an old oak is preserved while habitat is lost. The saved tree provides beauty and shade to the Walgreens parking lot on Broadway in Escondido.

The impact of the loss of these majestic trees is multi-fold – including cultural, environmental and aesthetic reasons. Many cultures, especially Native Americans, revere the trees and relied on them for sustenance. Loss of habitat and food for wildlife is another serious repercussion. Wildfire potential is increased as dead and dying trees mean increased fuel and felled trees can block roadways and paths used by fire fighters. Lastly, the trees are beautiful and the shade welcoming.

Monitoring the progress of the borer is a monumental task. The various agencies involved are asking for people not to import firewood from infected areas, as larvae remain in cut logs for up to two years. They also hope oak owners will inspect their trees and self-report signs of infestations at [www.gsob.org](http://www.gsob.org) or call 858-694-3897.

On a slightly more cheerful note, scientists hope to discover a natural parasite of the borer, although such research will take several years.

More information on the gold spotted oak borer may be learned by attending the Hellhole Canyon General meeting on January 29 at 10 AM in the Community Room at the Valley Center Library. Locations of other seminars and other information on GSOB can be found at [www.gsob.org](http://www.gsob.org).

**Friends of Hellhole Canyon**  
**Open Space Preserve**  
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**Www.hellholecanyon.org**



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Friends General Meeting Saturday Jan 29th at  
10am, at VC County Library! Don't miss our  
program on Oak Trees!!! More inside!

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## **As if the Borer Were Not Enough of a Problem...**

A general oak decline is occurring in Southern California. Besides the borer, environmental conditions also affect the oaks. Drought and its opposite – saturated soils – weaken the usual mighty oak trees as roots cannot develop or function correctly, thus reducing the natural defenses of the trees.

Secondly, what are called biotic factors also affect the oak. These include disease and over crowding. Again the natural resistance of the trees is compromised. Thus, indigenous insects such as the oak bark beetle and the oak ambrosia beetle are provided greater access to their favorite food. Pesticides are available, but once the tree is under attack, they are of little use. A third contributor to oak decline is urban sprawl. Construction activity, over pruning and over watering weaken the oaks as beetles are attracted to pruning wounds. As far as watering, experts say oaks should be watered only two or three times during the summer. Any other irrigation should be kept well away from the trees.

Another widely publicized problem is the importation of nursery plants, which is believed to have brought sudden oak death (SOD) to the county, although the identified infestation was contained.

Information on these problems will be provided at the January 29 general meeting of the Friends of Hellhole Canyon, to be held at 10 AM in the Community Room at the Valley Center Library.