

THE ISLAND INSIDER

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A Publication of Channel Islands Restoration

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A Letter from our Executive Director

The Breadth and Reach of CIR Projects

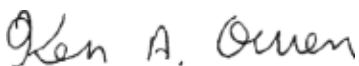
Of the more than 100 projects CIR has worked on over the last 22 years, most of our long-time supporters can probably only name about two dozen. The most memorable ones involved many volunteers, so those are familiar to many people. Projects on the Channel Islands, including Anacapa and San Nicolas Islands, attracted 300 to 400 volunteers each. More recently, we have worked with volunteers at the San Marcos Foothills, the Carpinteria Salt Marsh, and the Los Padres National Forest, among other places. However, most of our work is on projects that are not volunteer-friendly, and as a result, few people are aware of them. In the last year alone, CIR has worked on habitat restoration projects in 15 locations in three counties that have not involved volunteers, so most of our supporters are completely unaware of them.

In Santa Barbara County, we are working on seven staff-only projects, including three in and around Elings Park. We have planted trees and maintained other plantings along Los Positas Drive. We have planted over 100 oaks in the park and even more shrubs along the park's Veteran's Walk. We continue to work on a project at Baron Ranch on the Gaviota coast, plus on an invasive weed control project at Hollister Ranch. In South County, we have been removing weeds at Hammond's Meadow in Montecito in preparation for a large restoration project happening there this year. We are fighting weeds and planting natives in the Juncal watershed in the forest behind Montecito, and we have a county-wide project to revegetate areas that were formally homeless encampments.

In Ventura County, we finished a large Arundo removal project along the Santa Clara River on a 250-acre parcel. We are doing similar Arundo removal work in another location on the river, and we will soon start work at yet another site in Santa Paula. We help the Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency near Thousand Oaks and Newbury Park remove invasive weeds. We have done similar work near McGrath State Beach for over ten years, and we recently started Dune Restoration at Point Mugu Naval Air Station. Although we have recently started using volunteers in the Piru watershed, our staff have been working to remove invasive Tamarisk for several years in that area.

In Los Angeles County, we have recently removed weeds and planted native marsh plants at the Ballona Wetlands near Marina Del Rey. We have been working for several years maintaining restoration sites in the Angeles National Forest, and we have recently started a job to remove Arundo and plant natives at the Malibu Jewish Center along the Pacific Coast Highway.

When we tell people about all this work, the reaction is usually, "I had no idea!" CIR is busy in places all over our region, restoring habitat for many agencies and partners on hundreds of acres yearly. These projects are too technically challenging or unsafe for untrained people, so we use specialized staff and equipment to accomplish the job. We are making a difference from Santa Maria to Malibu every day, at this time when almost all we hear is bad news about the environment. Perhaps our work is the best-kept secret, but now you know!



Ken Owen
Executive Director

The Island Insider

Channel Islands Restoration - Vol. 22, Issue #1: May 2024
Contributors: Ken Owen, Alikoi Parra, Scott Orlosky, Lauren Harris,
Doug Morgon, and Holly Wright
Newsletter Design: John Ziegler

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Cover Photo: San Marcos Foothills by John Ziegler

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“When you really get into conservation and you start studying ecology, you begin to see how these systems are interconnected. And it’s absolutely fascinating. And it really turned me on to ecology and to the idea of working hard to conserve the wild lands that we still have in our local area.”

Ken Owen

CIR Executive Director

PROVIDING SOLUTIONS



Restoration Work



Channel Islands Restoration has been restoring habitats on the Channel Islands and the coastal areas of Southern California since 2001. We specialize in eradicating non-native invasive species, propagating native plants, planting native plants, installing irrigation systems, preparing habitat restoration plans, and conducting botanical or biological surveys. CIR staff have expertise in identifying native and non-native plants and threatened and endangered species.

Volunteer Programs

Our nonprofit volunteer program is unique. We rely on volunteers to help us carry out much of our environmental restoration and conservation. We've worked with more than 12,000 adult volunteers since 2002, from the remote Channel Islands to the Los Padres National Forest. We offer a variety of incredible volunteer opportunities where we teach people about the natural world and provide the means to make a sustainable environmental difference in the community.



Youth Education Trips



Channel Islands Restoration provides quality service-learning opportunities to school and youth groups on the California Channel Islands that emphasize habitat restoration and island ecology. Students receive hands-on restoration experience while learning about conservation biology and the unique ecology of the Channel Islands National Park.

Philanthropy

Our mission includes philanthropic activities that fund open space acquisition and environmental stewardship. In 2021, CIR worked with a coalition of groups to raise an astonishing \$18,600,000 in ninety days to buy 101 acres of rare native grassland habitat and open space in Santa Barbara just weeks away from being developed with luxury homes. The property has been added to the adjacent San Marcos Foothills Preserve, enlarging the preserve to 301 acres. CIR is currently preparing to work with Channel Islands National Park on a philanthropic campaign to raise funding for habitat restoration on Eastern Santa Cruz Island.



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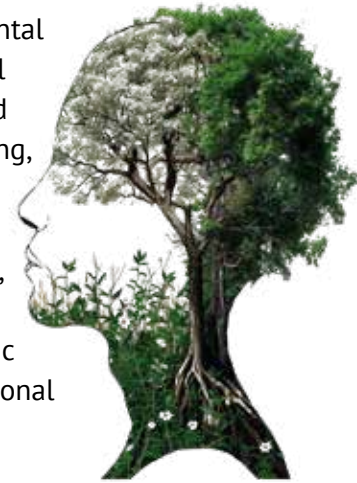
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Want to become a member or increase your membership level today? Make a gift at www.cirweb.org/donate In addition to supporting habitat restoration, your donation will give you access to tiers of benefits, which include invitations to private events, merchandise, virtual talks, and of course our sincere gratitude.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, an important period for raising awareness about mental health issues, promoting understanding, and reducing stigma. The stigma surrounding mental health is a significant barrier to open dialogue and seeking help. People can feel embarrassed or guilt-ridden to speak openly about this topic due to fear of discrimination, misunderstanding, or judgment. As someone who comes from a Native (Chumash) upbringing, I understand the profound impact on my community and the various ways it affects us. Our historical trauma stemming from colonization, forced assimilation, displacement from ancestral lands, violence, and ethnocide has left us with generational trauma and high rates of substance abuse. We face barriers to health care and treatment due to the distrust of these systems and geographic isolation. Despite these challenges, culturally tailored mental health programs such as traditional healing and partnerships with tribal organizations are ways Natives are promoting as well as reclaiming mental wellness within our community.



Something I realized from personal experience, in addition to reading recent studies, is that engaging in outdoor activities can be an effective and accessible way to support mental health by increasing physical activity. Outdoor activities such as hiking, running, biking, and gardening/restoration provide opportunities for physical exercise, which is known to have mood-boosting effects. Regular physical activity helps release endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals. Fostering a connection to nature is another excellent example, as being in natural environments allows individuals to connect with the natural world, which can add a sense of wonder, perspective, and awe. Nature calms the psyche, making people feel more grounded and connected to something greater than themselves. This also allows us to feel a sense of accomplishment as working to restore native habitats provides a sense of purpose and achievement. Seeing the tangible results of one's efforts, such as the growth of native plants and the return of wildlife, can boost self-esteem and satisfaction.

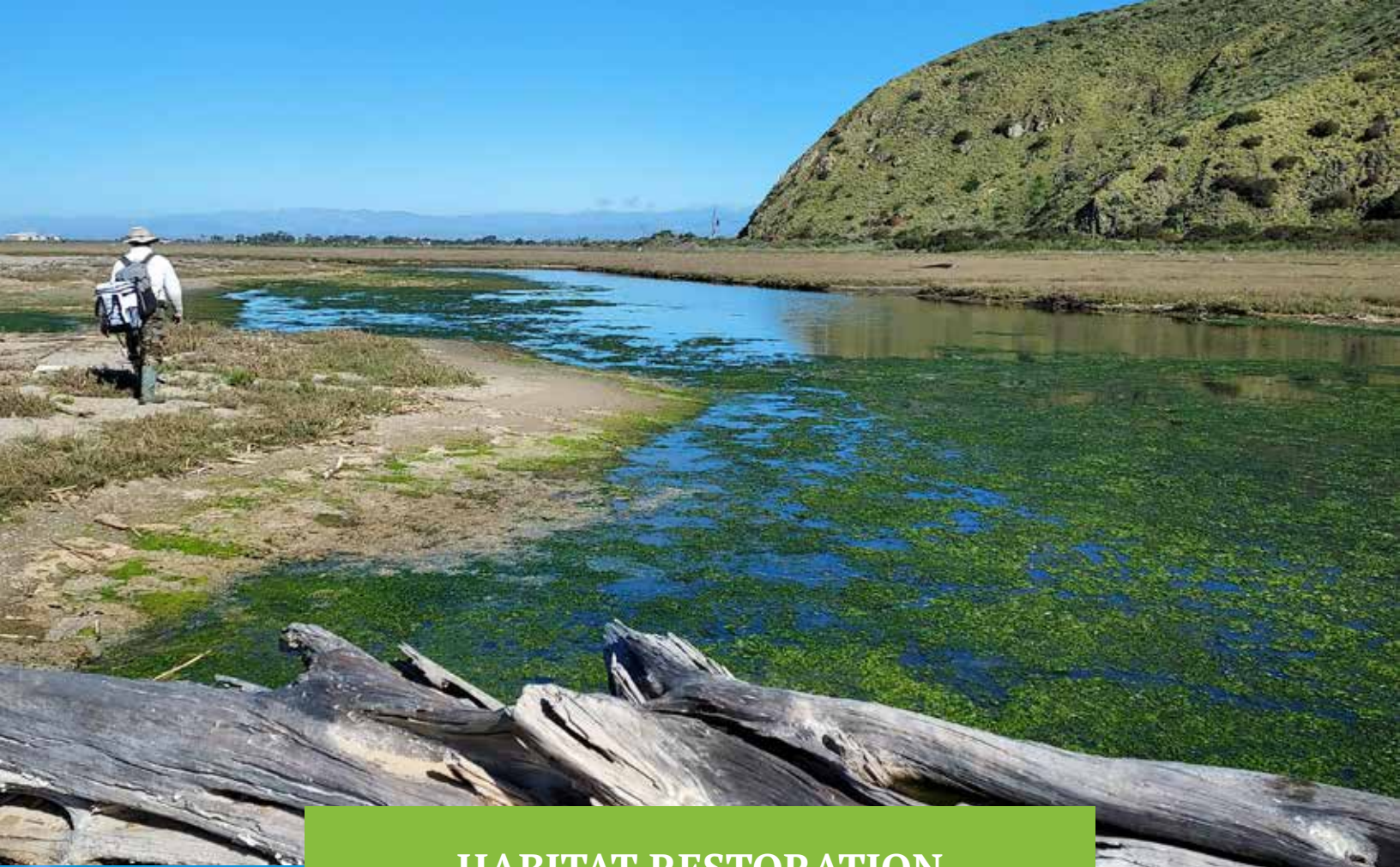
Lastly, on my journey of habitat restoration, I noticed I was often involved in teamwork and collaboration. This provided me with opportunities for social interaction and connection with others with similar interests. Building relationships and having a sense of community can provide emotional support while reducing feelings of isolation or loneliness.

Overall, being outside and participating in activities like restoring native habitat can promote mental health by fostering a sense of connection to nature, providing opportunities for physical activity, instilling a sense of accomplishment, encouraging mindfulness, and facilitating social connection. We know that by implementing these strategies and promoting a culture of openness and support, we can reduce the stigma surrounding mental health and create a more inclusive and compassionate society. Volunteering with Channel Islands Restoration to plant native species is a powerful way to positively impact the environment and your well-being.



kiwa'nan,
Alikoi Parra
CIR Board Member





HABITAT RESTORATION



Pt. Mugu Dune and Marsh Restoration



Mugu Lagoon

Written by Lauren Harris, *Staff Ecologist*



Growing cuttings from Mugu Lagoon

Mugu Lagoon is the largest relatively undisturbed coastal salt marsh along the Southern California coastline. **CIR recently kicked off an exciting new project to revegetate a section of native marsh and dune habitat at the Point Mugu Naval Air Station.** This is part of a larger project conducted by the Navy, Whiting-Turner, and Stantec to restore the tidal flow of the wetland to increase drainage and benefit native habitat and water quality. Currently, CIR staff

are working to collect cuttings and propagate them at our Summerland Greenwell Preserve. Our palette is made up of a range of marsh and dune species that we expect will propagate and transplant easily and will act to reduce erosion in the areas to be excavated for hydrology restoration. **This improvement to habitat connectivity and biodiversity will help preserve the rare California dune, marsh, and tidal wetland habitats which are a dwindling resource in the face of rising anthropogenic pressures.**



CIR Staff propagate cuttings from Mugu Lagoon

Los Padres National Forest – Watershed Conservation



Backcountry Invasive Plant Removal

Written by Holly Wright, *Senior Project Manager*

CIR is currently working in the front and backcountry of the Los Padres National Forest in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties. We have several projects involving invasive non-native species that dominate and damage California native ecosystems. These include tamarisk (*Tamarix ramosissima*) and perennial veldt grass (*Erharta erecta*), a relatively new and highly problematic plant already infesting the central coast and continuing south. **We work closely with forest biologists on these restoration projects funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). We have been given five consecutive grants to carry out tamarisk removal work since 2015.**



Los Padres Outfitters provided pack support

We're hopeful to continue this much-needed work, as there is still much to do across the Los Padres Forest Watersheds. **Tamarisk grows thick and fast and forms dense stands, creating large areas of impenetrable shade and leaf litter. The shade discourages native seedlings from trees to grasses, decreasing the diversity of plants and animals in the ecosystem. The high salt content in its extensive dry brush and litter causes soil salination, impacting the health and survival of established plants in proximity and the potential vitality of the native seed bank. A tamarisk root system is extensive, potentially growing 100 feet deep to reach water and up to 50 feet laterally, where secondary roots close to the soil surface can readily soak up rainfall.** The roots are wide-ranging, with suckers that produce fast-growing, vertical stems of new trees.

As with Arundo, a tamarisk monoculture outcompetes the native riparian vegetation on water consumption. One mature tamarisk can use up to 200 gallons of water daily and, like Arundo, creates an invasive plant fire regime cycle. The highly flammable tamarisk monoculture is burned to the ground but remains alive under the soil. It then responds with rapid growth, outcompeting the recovery of native vegetation. A seed is typically short-lived but, once germinated, can grow from a seedling to a flowering plant in one summer season. **A mature tree can produce 500,000 seeds in one year, and high up in backcountry drainages causes devastating impacts downstream and throughout a watershed. Already threatened native ecosystems can become overtaken in just a few seasons, mirroring the fate of many riparian systems that have been overtaken by tamarisk monocultures in the southwestern United States and Mexico.** This is why the National Forest Service and NFWF funds CIR to prevent this in the Los Padres National Forest. Our tamarisk removal projects include a volunteer program where conservationists and adventurers join our crew in this challenging work. Accessing the rivers and drainages of these watersheds can be difficult, even for those familiar with the area. Once we veer off the more commonly traveled paths, we find ourselves in a world that remains primarily home only to the mountains and wildlife.

In early March 2024, Channel Islands Restoration guided 15 volunteers on a 5-day backpacking expedition into the Sespe Wilderness. Our journey started at Piru Creek and wound steeply up and along the Pothole Trail for six miles. At the Potholes, we found a large lake and meadow where previously, on past trips, we had seen only tamarisk. Our last trip had been way back in 2019, and the contrast was happily different this year. The vernal lake's capacity was no doubt helped by

the volume of water that rained over the past two years. In addition, the groundwater and terrain are healthier from CIR's past work of over the last nine years. **The average estimate of water consumed by one mature tamarisk tree is 200 gallons. Before 2020, we removed 790 mature trees and hundreds of seedlings; these combined could have consumed 433,000,000 gallons of water in the five years since we removed them.. Instead, we were surrounded by an abundant variety of native plants that had moved into the void created by tamarisk removal.** Of the 6000 native flora taxa in California, 25% are in Ventura County, which is only 1% of the state's area. Many of these are in the Los Padres but at risk of habitat loss from other non-native invasive plants.



CIR Volunteers around the fire



CIR Volunteers in the field



Pothole Trail, Los Padres National Forest

As we surveyed, our collected data showed more evidence of successful work in the Potholes and along the adjacent stretch of Agua Blanca Creek. CIR crew and volunteers shared insights about the local native flora and fauna, including the endangered California red-legged frog and arroyo toad. We extend our gratitude to Los Padres Outfitters for their assistance with packing and stocking, their knowledge of the backcountry trails, and making our tired team reviving dinners, and to all our volunteers who have worked with us over nearly eight years of tamarisk removal, you help make this happen!

Chumash Ethnobotanical Garden



San Marcos Foothills West Mesa



Local Chumash community members

CIR is committed to taking on overall responsibility for the design, funding, installation and maintenance of a Chumash ethnobotanical garden in consultation with the Chumash and other community members.

Ultimately, we want this to be a Chumash project that we help facilitate. Work has begun on this native plant garden at the San Marcos Foothills West Mesa. You can see the area highlighted in red that will comprise the Chumash Garden Area.

As of 2024, we continue to break ground and are currently planting purple needle grass (*Stipa pulchra*) and California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*) in the garden area. CIR plans to install the full garden in the fall of 2024, and we are currently collecting seeds and are propagating plants in our nursery. We will host volunteer events for seed collecting and planting later this year. We are thrilled to be working collaboratively to create a stronger community and help restore the environment on the San Marcos Foothills West Mesa.



Map and location of the Chumash Garden



CREATING STRONGER COMMUNITIES



Riparian Habitat Restoration



Arundo donax is a huge problem.

Written by Doug Morgan, *Operations Manager*

Originally imported as a building material, arundo was used as purlins to support clay tile roofs on historic adobe buildings and for erosion control. It has been in the area for over 100 years, but it got loose and became a problem in the last 40 years. The irony is that it has become so prevalent even though it does not produce viable seed in North America...yet.

It's a beast of an invasive, 30 feet tall, and sitting on a vast root complex that is often greater in mass and volume than what is seen above ground. It grows in monocultures that are impossible to walk through and consumes more than ten times the amount of water compared to native vegetation. The rhizomes are as large as your leg at times and have enough stored energy to regrow even after multiple mowings. Every part of the plant can regrow when swept downstream, and at times, massive multi-acre-sized rafts of Arundo monoculture get swept into flooded rivers. They can demolish bridges and other structures as they charge downstream. It can out-compete the native plants and eliminate suitable habitats for native birds and mammals. **Arundo also changes the flow and velocity of the rivers, channeling the currents and eliminating the broad, shallow, gravel areas the steelhead needs to spawn. Most of our native amphibians require an ever-changing river basin to reproduce successfully.** In the high-water events of 2023, the swollen Santa Clara River was redirected by a dense wall of mature Arundo, causing the river to turn abruptly south, where it consumed and swept away 17 acres of one of our riparian restoration sites. Arundo is highly flammable in almost every season of the year, and worse yet, when ignited, the burning leaves are swept downwind, creating hundreds of more ignition points. Firefighters have described it as the fastest-moving fire they deal with.

Starting about 20 years ago, Ken Owen led a team to manage Arundo. Since then, CIR has removed Arundo in Summerland, Refugio Canyon, Malibu, Fillmore, and several sites in and around Santa Paula. Over that time, our methods improved, and the size of our jobs grew, culminating in a massive 250-acre, four-year project involving heavy equipment, daily avian monitors, biologists, and at one-point helicopters to move our equipment safely over the nesting endangered Least Bell's Vireo. We currently have two more Arundo contracts signed, and we are waiting for the conditions to improve enough to start work.

We have several more commitments waiting on permits or additional funding. CIR has become the contractor of choice for removing this scourge while still maintaining the remaining river's health.

This is why... Our crews are very well-trained in native plants and riparian systems. **We know what to look for and what to protect. We seek out areas to preserve within the arundo monocultures, islands of diverse native plants and trees.** We focus on the high ground that will be less affected by the next high-water event and leave a habitat that is immediately suitable for returning native species, especially birds. We often see native species return before we are completely done. We are trained and experienced enough that we recognize when an endangered species shows up, and we give them the proper space and respect to reproduce.

That is often what we see in the field... **We have all heard the term "habitat loss" so many times that we have mostly grown numb to the dire effects of habitat loss on our native species, whether endangered or not. On almost every large project we work on, we see the immediate response of native species rushing to fill the void or capitalize on the new suitable terrain because they have nowhere else to go. That is why we sometimes work shoulder-to-shoulder with third-party monitors in sensitive areas; we know the native species are dying to find places to live.** Birds are usually the first to move back in once the Arundo is removed, and having avian experts onsite allows us to find their locations quickly and establish buffer zones around their nesting sites. For a Federally listed species, we create a 500' radius buffer, marked with flagging tape in the field and a circle on the data input mapping software that every field worker carries with them. Once the nesting season is over and the avian monitors clear the buffer zones, we return and can safely remove the Arundo in those areas. Moving through an area peppered with 'no-go' buffers is challenging, but we look at it as a demonstration of our restoration success. Birds may be first, but we see almost every native wild species return as the restoration progresses, including a rather startling encounter with a mother bear and three cubs on one of our project sites within the Santa Paula city limits! The point is that our work is so valuable to the returning native species that they often push us out before we are done.

For us, that is the best reward. Being restricted within sites where a Least Bell's Vireo nests, Arroyo Toad breed, or a Kangaroo Rat makes a burrow. This is the ultimate validation of the immediate benefits of our restoration efforts. Walking up on a sleeping mother bear and her adorable frolicking cubs, although in retrospect another validation, is something we will gladly take a pass on for future wildlife sightings.



CIR Staff in the process of removing a 30 ft wall of arundo

VOLUNTEER PROJECT

Bluebird Project



San Marcos Foothills Preserve | Photo by John Ziegler

Western Bluebirds (*sialia mexicana*)



Volunteers building blue bird boxes

After a couple of days of light-soaking rain, it was time. A bird-loving all-volunteer crew met up at the San Marcos Foothill Preserve to put the finishing touches on the long-awaited “Bluebird” project. Bluebirds love to nest in small cavities in trees, but they will fly by if there are not enough cavities or they aren’t quite right. **We aimed to create and install 12 perfect “homes” to develop a friendly habitat for these beautiful birds, specifically Western Bluebirds (*Sialia mexicana*). If we did a good job, we would have incrementally**

expanded the bluebird habitat in yet another overused native grassland area, bringing it back one small step from the brink. These small insect-loving birds are all part of the restoration “pyramid.” Grasslands attract insects, which attract bluebirds (amongst others) and so on up the food chain. Installing these hand-built homes will help fill in one of the ecological “blanks” in the chain.

Scott Orlosky, *Board Secretary*



Burrow Project



San Marcos Foothills Preserve | Photo by Ken Owen

Burrowing Owls (*athene cunicularia*)

In 2023, CIR installed three artificial burrows for Burrowing Owls; careful consideration was taken to determine the precise locations of the artificial burrows. The owls prefer burrows with relatively elevated positioning to avoid flooding, loose soil, and nearby structures like mounds or fences to use as a lookout. **The burrows were required to be installed in an open area, located off-trail and away from people, most importantly, away from dogs. Even a minor disturbance from people or off-leash dogs can disturb and flush out the owls, which causes stress, interrupts feeding behavior, and leaves them vulnerable to hawk predation.** When visiting the San Marcos Foothills, please do not depart the public trails, and a friendly reminder to keep your dog leashed while taking your walk. **This year, the artificial burrow installed by CIR welcomed its first burrowing owl; quickly, our staff named the owl Neil, as in Armstrong, because he was the first to use the installation.** Our Executive Director also named him pewyok', a Chumash word for burrowing owl. From October to April, burrowing owls use burrows like those at the San Marcos Foothills as an over-wintering site. CIR has restored grassland at the Preserve since 2018. One goal of the program is to reestablish a population of burrowing owls on the property, and we hope that the artificial burrows, along with prescribed grazing which restores the grassland, will attract more overwintering owls. Wayne Chapman from UC Santa Barbara inspired us to replicate their successful artificial burrow program, and installation at the Preserve was supervised by CIR Operations Manager, Doug Morgan.

When does Ulysses S. Grant become Benjamin Franklin?



During Matching May!

Four generous donors have pledged \$25,000 for CIR if we can match that amount dollar for dollar!



\$50 becomes \$100
\$250 becomes \$500
\$500 becomes \$1000



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Support Local Habitat

Your support will also give you access to exclusive membership benefits.

Channel Islands Restoration needs support from its members to carry out its mission of habitat restoration and environmental education. Since 2002, we have completed over 100 projects across the Channel Islands and mainland. These achievements have been made possible by the invaluable assistance of over 12,000 dedicated volunteers, including approximately several thousand school children who would not have had the opportunity to experience field trips or environmental education otherwise. Thanks to the overwhelming support from our community, we can maximize the impact of every dollar donated. Your donation will support habitat restoration and give you access to the tiers of donor benefits, including invitations to nature tours, island trips, private events, merchandise, virtual talks, and, of course, our sincere gratitude.

Membership Levels and Benefits



Island Scrub Jay

\$50 per year

- Early access to CIR hosted events
- 20% Discount on Merchandise
- CIR E-Newsletter



Island Ironwood

\$500 per year or \$40 per month

- All of the Coastal Goldenbush benefits
- 15% discounts on all CIR activities
- Early access to CIR trips



Coastal Goldenbush

\$120 per year or \$10 per month

- All of the Island Scrub Jay benefits
- CIR Newsletter with decal included
- Your choice of a CIR Cap or T-Shirt
- A pair of CIR gardening gloves to wear at home or to volunteer events



Island Fox

\$1000 per year or \$80 per month

- All of the Island Ironwood benefits
- 25% discounts on all CIR activities
- A free invitation for 2 to a VIP Event
- Priority access to volunteer opportunities



Donate Online at cirweb.org

Sign up to automatically donate each month until you cancel. We will contact you each year so that we can send you any additional membership gifts.

Or Send a Check To:

Channel Islands Restoration
 PO Box 40228 Santa Barbara, CA 93140

**Please be sure to include your phone number, email, and shipping address with the check.*

Channel Islands Restoration is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and any contributions will be tax deductible. To save paper, all acknowledgements are electronic. For a paper copy, please contact us at the time of your donation.

Meet Our Advisory Council



David H. Anderson

David H. Anderson retired in 2010 after a 40-year career as an attorney specializing in environmental law, with a volunteer focus on land conservation law. He co-founded the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County in 1983, where he served as board chair and also served as pro bono legal counsel for many years during which he negotiated the acquisition of the Carpinteria Bluffs, Sedgwick Ranch and Rancho Arroyo Hondo. He is a past board chair of the Museum of Natural History, Santa Barbara Foundation, national Land Trust Alliance and also the Wood River Land Trust in Idaho.

Russ Charvonia

Russ has worked in the financial services industry since 1980. He is a Senior Wealth Advisor and Managing Director for Mariner Wealth advisors, providing financial and wealth management advice to individual and business clients. He holds several professional designations, earning his Juris doctor degree from Ventura College of Law in 2003. He was admitted to the California Bar in 2004. He is the founder of Channel Islands Law Group in Ventura, which specializes in estate and charitable gift planning.



Wayne R. Ferren Jr

Wayne has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Geology and a Masters in Biology from Rutgers University. He worked as a botanist at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) for 26 years (1978-2004), serving in various capacities including the Executive Director of the Museum of Systematics and Ecology, Director of Carpinteria Salt Marsh Reserve, and Assistant Director of the UCSB Natural Reserve System.



Dennis Houghton

Dennis Houghton has over 35 years of management experience in the pharmaceutical, biotech, and biomedical software industries. Dennis started his career in Santa Barbara with over 15 years at pharmaceutical company G.D. Searle & Co., where he served in many positions including as the National Director of Managed Care Programs.



Greg Giloth

Greg was born in Glen Ellyn, Ill on March 6, 1947 and attended local schools until his junior year of high school. In 1963 he moved with his family to Summit, NJ and graduated from Summit High School in 1965. Greg has worked in computers and high tech for most of his career.



Karl Hutterer

Karl looks back on an academic career as an archaeologist at the University of Michigan and the University of Washington. He conducted research in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, focusing chiefly on long-term human interactions with tropical ecosystems. He moved to Santa Barbara in 2000 to become Executive Director of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History.



Julie Kummel

Julie is a 20-year volunteer and supporter of Channel Islands Restoration. She is a retired nurse and teacher. Julie's interests include habitat restoration, outdoor recreation, and outdoor education.

Hank Mitchel

Hank is a multi-generation Californian and a lifelong outdoorsman. He has hiked, camped, and explored throughout California, including on all eight of our California Channel Islands. Efforts to preserve and share our natural environment have always been of primary interest. He currently serves as a Trustee of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. Previously he was a docent at the Museum and the Channel Islands Naturalist Corps. of Natural History.



Marianne Parra

Marianne Parra is Chumash with lineage to Santa Ynez, Goleta, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz and Ventura. Marianne spent many years from early childhood to late teens on the Santa Ynez Reservation with family, learning and practicing culture and being connected with elders. Family and building connections within her communities have always been very important. She has a lengthy background in the medical field and doing volunteer work with domestic violence survivors.



Phil White

CIR Board member Phil White lives in Ojai with his wife Suzanne. Their home is only blocks from the trails in the National Forest and they take advantage of hiking on a regular basis. Phil is an engineer and also has a passion for flora and fauna. In addition to serving on the CIR Board, Phil is on the Board of Directors for the Ventura Botanical Gardens. He is associated with the Ojai Valley Museum.

Steve Junak

Steve Junak retired in 2013 from his longtime position as curator of the Clifton Smith Herbarium at Santa Barbara Botanic Garden. He has continued his relationship with the Garden as a research associate and botanist emeritus. He also is an active researcher and expert on the flora of the islands of California and Baja California, Mexico.



Lyndal Laughrin

Lyndal Laughrin is the former director of the University of California Santa Cruz Island Reserve and has worked with Channel Islands Restoration since our inception in 2002. He is a long-time champion for environmental conservation and has watched our organization flourish over the last 20 years. Lyndal completed his Ph.D. at UCSB and is an authority on the island fox.



Become Involved with CIR – Apply for Board and Committee Vacancies

We are excited to announce that Channel Islands Restoration (CIR) is expanding its Board and Committee membership opportunities and is actively seeking passionate individuals like you to join us in our mission. As we continue to grow and face new challenges, we recognize the importance of a diverse and skilled Board of Directors and Committees to guide our organization. We believe that individuals from different backgrounds, with a broad range of experience, will contribute to our continued success.

If you're passionate about local conservation, have strong leadership skills, and are committed to our community, we invite you to apply for a position on the CIR Board or a Committee. You will work alongside a dedicated group who share your environmental passion. Our Board and Committee members meet once a month over Zoom, and opportunities to make a difference include:

- Providing strategic oversight to ensure CIR fulfills its mission effectively. You will join at least one topical sub-committee.
- Assisting with fundraising efforts to support our conservation projects and initiatives, including a regular financial donation.
- Help with community awareness and outreach about our work.
- Collaboration with our staff to implement ongoing goals and projects.

To apply for our leadership positions, please email ken@cirweb.org with the subject line Board and Committee Application and include your name and a brief statement outlining your interest and qualifications.

We highly encourage individuals from diverse backgrounds to apply, including those with expertise in environmental science, finance, law, or nonprofit governance. However, we welcome applicants from all backgrounds who are enthusiastic about supporting our mission.

Together, let's work toward a more sustainable future.

Sincerely,
The Channel Islands Restoration Team



We're a 501(c)(3) non-profit contractor that works to restore habitat on the Channel Islands and adjacent mainland through invasive plant management, native plant propagation, and native plant installation.

VOLUNTEER WITH CIR!



Habitat Restoration



Natural History Tours



Backcountry Trips



Contracting



Trail Work



Invasive Species Removal



Island Volunteer Trips



Youth Field Trips



Research



Propagation



Docent Programs



Education

[Volunteer at cirweb.org/volunteer](https://cirweb.org/volunteer) ➔



Channel Islands Restoration
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