



Join Us!

**Sunday, November 24, 2024
9 AM - 3 PM**

Merry Little Mountain Plant and Gather at Chilao School

Small-scale habitat restoration on the Chilao School property and potluck style meal and gathering, everyone welcome. Bring a posthole shovel if you own one. We will be dividing and replanting deer grass plants, weather permitting, and doing some light debris clean up from helicopter wash in the adjacent (presently dry) stream bed. Many hands will make light work. Chilao School is located in the back of Chilao Campground in the Angeles National Forest, accessible from Angeles Crest Highway by entering Chilao Campground at mile marker 49.70 and following the signs to the fire station. Bring your good thoughts to add to a Gratitude Tree; bring your troubles to add to a paper bag that will be burned in the wood stove at the end of the day. We'll have pens and paper ready for you.

**Saturday, December 7, 2024
11 AM - 3 PM**

**Simi Valley Public Library
2969 Tapo Canyon Road, Simi Valley CA 93063**

Redbird's 29th Annual Blanket Drive and Mini Powwow Benefitting the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation of South Dakota

Join us for a family-style indigenous gathering. All powwow drums and dancers welcome. Everyone welcome. We are collecting new, warm, washable blankets and the funds to ship them to South Dakota. We have worked with Alex White Plume of Manderson, SD for nearly two decades to deliver these blankets to rural families as the gifts that they are and we are very grateful to do so for another year. If you can't come to the gathering please consider making a contribution online at RedbirdsVisions.org

Whole Systems from the Roots Up

Grass. It's a plant community that lacks the emotive power of trees. It can't compete with our feelings about wildlife. It's hard to get funding for grass projects. Yet, our native grasses are the unsung heroes of the landscape, and we need to recognize, appreciate, cultivate and propagate them now more than ever.

Native grasses secure soil, secure moisture in the soil, defend the ground from the onslaught of invasive species, and feed wildlife. They are slow to burn, so fire isn't spread quickly by native grasses, nor does it reach an intense heat level. Native grasses do not readily carry fire up the vegetation ladder into trees.

Native grasses are a crucial element in the diets of prey animals such as deer. The habitat decline and type conversion of grassland habitat is cited as the probable cause for the decline in the deer population in the Angeles National Forest, which was first noted in the 1970s and which continues to be in decline to this day.

And deer are the key animal species that feed the apex predators and in turn, the scavengers. But they also have a symbiotic relationship with the grasses. They keep the grasses trimmed, so that new, succulent growth emerges. Because without that trimming, the grasses become hard, and less palatable. So the grasses themselves need the deer and other herbivores to maintain them.

And while planting grass may not have the seem heroic connotation as planting trees, it's easier, and probably has a much higher success ratio.

Weather permitting, we'll be creating a study area on the Chilao School property on November 24 that will help us understand what kind of success ratio can be expected. We'll be dividing and replanting hyper-local deer grass specimens into areas dominated by invasive cheat grass.

The Good Bear

In the coming months, we'll be working on another level also. We'll be asking for better education and signage in the regions of the hunting area known as D-11, inside of which the Charlton-Chilao recreation complex lies.

On Federal maps, the entire recreation complex, from Charlton Flat, over Mooney Road and all the way to Santa Clara Divide, is a no hunting zone. But there is no signage to indicate that, and an abundance of misinformation and

confusion about whose regulations apply among hunters, forest volunteers, and even USFS employees.

Hunting within the Chilao campground complex is common, whether legal or not. Hunters are also particularly fond of the Hensley and Lagossi properties, just beyond the fire station. When these properties were occupied, we were able to encourage hunters to avoid these areas.

Another hunting season might have gone by without our involvement, but on October 12, a hunter with a bear tag shot a bear in the campground, and then went to the fire station to seek help recovering it. Tanner and I were on our way to a wedding when we passed the investigation site. I took some hasty pictures. And realized as I did that it was probably our local bear...a "good bear"...that had been killed. And that we were no longer at liberty to ignore the situation.

Education seems the most logical first step. All USFS employees and volunteers need to know where hunting is legal and where it isn't. That same information needs to be widely shared with the public. Signage is critical, and it need not take a lengthy procurement process to develop signage. Simple "no hunting" signs are enough. Information kiosks need to display this information, with maps that clearly illustrate the boundaries of the no hunting zone.

Other forests have apps that allow hunters to easily see where their boundaries are. The Angeles needs to develop this level of information. And not just to reduce the overlap of hunting and recreation activity. The Charlton-Chilao complex still has viable herbivore habitat. There should be a place in the forest where deer are safe from human predation, and have the resources they need to survive. The decline of deer populations has been known for decades, and is probably additionally impacted by recent fires such as the Bridge fire. While the aftermath of the Bridge fire could produce more deer habitat in the short term, the immediate impact of the fire likely had a negative effect on herbivore populations.

The long term viability of hunting in the Angeles may just depend on our ability to regulate hunting in the Charlton-Chilao recreation complex. We've created a new page on our website devoted to this issue. We will add additional maps and information as they become available.

<https://www.redbirdsvisions.org/being-here-in-the-angeles-national-forest-now.html>

Landmark 717

One of the great pleasures of the last few years has been meeting and getting to know Mark Mutti and Jennifer Jackson. Mark is the producer of Landmark 717, which we also like to refer to as "What really happens in the Angeles..."

Mark is an amazing human, a Redbird supporter, a very skilled videographer, photographer, editor, journalist and producer and we are so grateful to be within his orbit. Check out the Landamrk 717 project here:

<https://landmark717.com>

<https://www.youtube.com/c/Landmark717>

<https://instagram.com/landmark717>

<https://twitter.com/landmark717>

Redbird Turns Thirty, thanks to our supporters

Redbird was officially formed in 1994. We're still here, and still working, thanks to the support of our friends and community. We are an all volunteer 501(c)(3) non profit organization, funded by individual and private donations as well as foundation and corporate philanthropy. Your generous support keeps our programs going, and your donations are tax deductible to the full extent of State and Federal law. You can donate securely online on our website, or via mail. In person donations at our events are also welcome.

RedbirdsVisions.org

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Redbird's 2024 Children of Many Colors Powwow

