



2011 Annual Report

"Reconnecting people with nature!"



Our Mission Statement

Orange County Hiking Club, a charitable, 501(c)(3) organization exists to promote physical, mental, and emotional wellness through connection with nature.

In addition to outdoor recreation for members of all ages, OC Hiking Club provides education, empowerment, encouragement, inspiration and healing to at-risk youth





"Reconnecting people with nature!"

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Dear OC Hiker & Backpacker,

Thank you for a great year! With your support OCHC membership grew by 1,300 in 2011 and now tops 8,200. We have increased the number of our dedicated volunteer Hike Organizers from forty to fifty-five, expanding the number of events OCHC can offer.

Once again, the SoCal Wildflower Fest and OC Wildflower Photo Contest were very successful. Through our partnership with OC Parks and the OC Register, an estimated 300 families, kids and adults enjoyed the wildflower hikes, backpacking tips, yoga, clinics on outdoor skills, and gourmet cooking on the trail at our SoCal Wildflower Fest. Over a thousand photos were entered in the SoCal Wildflower Photo Contest. These talented contestants have helped expand public appreciation of nature as well as given us beautiful photos to enjoy.

This year we were honored to receive a scholarship from the OC Community Foundation for their Sustainability Training Program and look forward to applying the valuable knowledge we have gained. We are also grateful for a generous grant from REI to develop and launch our new Volunteer Trail Guardians Program. This grant and opportunities that REI provides are important steps towards increasing stewardship within our community.

With growth and success come challenges. Although more people donated to OCHC and our financial support grew by over \$16,000, we ended 2011 with a small operating loss and had to defer action on some important goals. While we continued to expand our Kids In Need of Nature program, we have only begun to help kids who need the emotional and physical well-being KINN promotes. An expanded Trail Guardians program could help us keep more trails in good condition and improve overall stewardship of our public resources. And, of course, we want to keep growing our opportunities for great outdoor experiences for you and future members.

I am very proud of all that OCHC has accomplished with our current resources. But to meet your expectation and keep up with growing demands we need to grow our resources. As you take a closer look at full range of our activities and the benefit they provide to our community, please help us find new ways to reach our potential. And thanks again for all your support.

Suki Reed

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Suki Reed'. Below the signature is the word 'President' in a black serif font.

Thanks to Our Volunteers!

In July, OCHC received a Spotlight Award nomination for our efforts to "positively impact the physical activity, fitness and well-being of California's children and youth."



CONTENTS

Table of Contents

Our Programs

Kids in Need of Nature

Inspiring and Empowering Families, Adults and Children

Southern California Wildflower Fest

Southern California Wildflower Photo Contest

Trail Guardians

Our People

Our Member and Community Support

How We use Our Resources

Use of Resources by Program

Use of Resources by Expense Category

The Future

Our Business and Community Partners

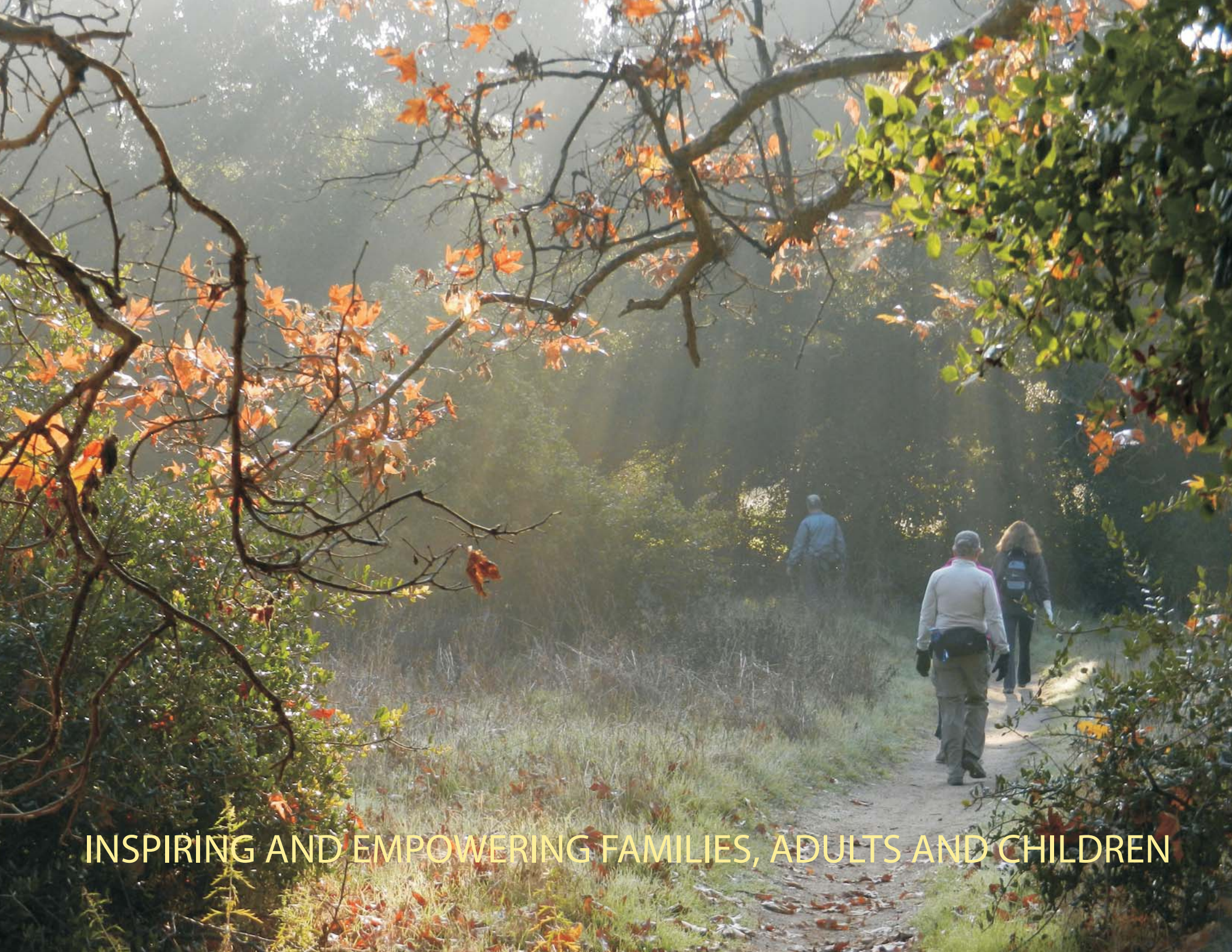
KIDS IN NEED OF NATURE





The OCHC Kids in Need of Nature Program fills a critical gap by taking disadvantaged youth into nature on hikes and outings. The program receives high praises from our community, agencies and youth organizations. Due to budgetary limits we have a waiting list of organizations who want their youth to have this experience. Your donation makes a BIG difference in the lives of these children.





INSPIRING AND EMPOWERING FAMILIES, ADULTS AND CHILDREN



Hikeminded people from all walks of life (no pun intended). Hiking professionals include families, doctors, lawyers, teachers, scientists, engineers, business owners, CEO's, married couples, single people, housewives, househusbands, single parent families, traditional families, nontraditional families, multiparent families and people from all careers and cultures. Note: This is a family style hiking club, it is not a dating club





SoCAL
WILDFLOWER FEST

www.SoCalWildflowerFest.org





In April, OCHC partnered with OC Parks and the OC Register to hold the annual SoCal Wildflower Fest and hike-a-thon. The event attracted almost 300 to Irvine Regional Park on a blustery Saturday for wildflower hikes, backpacking tips, yoga, clinics on outdoor skills, and gourmet cooking on the trail. Awards were presented for the winners of the SoCal Wildflower Photo Contest as well as volunteer honors for OC Hiking Club Hike Organizers.

Stephen Weller, a UCI professor in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and the president-elect of the American Society of Botany, showed participants how to easily identify local wildflowers.

Nature hikes were offered for all skill levels. On a beginners' walk led by OC Hiking Club organizers Kathy B. and Jeannie T., hikers saw wildflowers and plants, including California sage, wild radishes, purple nightshade, wild cucumbers, California poppies, buckwheat and cactus blooms. Jeannie leads about three hikes a week for the club, including hikes for the Kids in Need of Nature Program, and Kathy leads about four a month.

Clinics led by OCHC Hike Organizers demonstrated outdoor skills for eager participants. Neil F. demonstrated how to hit the trail for overnight or extended trips with the lightest and smallest possible backpack. Neil does an overnight trip with a backpack weighing about 22 pounds, 9 ounces. Laura and Mark I. showed participants how to pack and prepare gourmet and ultra-light food for the trail, and how to make it all fit in a bear canister. Rene Lopez led a workshop on nature photography for "kids and newbies."



OC WILDFLOWER PHOTO CONTEST



The third annual OC Wildflower Photo Contest sponsored by the Orange County Register and OC Hiking Club drew nearly 1,200 entries. Judges and online voters chose these winners.



WILDFLOWER YOUTH CATEGORY:
Brandon Burtis, Fountain Valley



JUDGE'S PICK: Paul Thai, West Covina



WILDFLOWER NON-NATIVE
FLOWERS: Heather Toller,
Placentia



WILDFLOWER PETS AND
PEOPLE: Sakumi Yokoyama,
Irvine



VOTES WINNER: Christian Sanchez of Irvine found a patch of yellow flowers and decided to take a picture of his friend Jimmy Dangamong them. The photo received 12,011 votes.



NATURE (WILDFLOWERS): Daniel
Miller, Anaheim



WILDFLOWER NATURE ONLY:
Mike Montgomery, Mission Viejo

TRAIL GUARDIANS

In 2011 OCHC began a new partnership with REI, OC Parks and others to create the "Trail Guardians" program. Our goal is to develop a cadre hiking enthusiasts who are trained to be better stewards of our of public lands and trails. These "Trail Guardians" will gain a better understanding of park operations and how they can assist park staff in monitoring trail conditions and identifying problems. In addition to picking up trash, Trail Guardians will help by moving small hazards off trails, reporting issues to park staff, and participating in scheduled trail maintenance and habitat restoration projects. Program development began in the fall of 2011, with training to be completed during 2012.





“Nature is not a place to visit. It is home.”

Gary Snyder

THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Each of our members is important to the success of OCHC. We constantly learn from and are inspired by our fellow hikers. However, the heart and backbone of OCHC are the Hike Organizers, that dedicated cadre of volunteers who organize hikes, offer their special expertise to help other hikers and work within the community to keep expanding outdoor opportunities.

Our Hike Organizers do much more than lead a group of hikers along a trail. To become a hike organizer, a member must gain prior hiking experience within the group. OCHC reviews the background and skills of each Hike Organizer to assure that they will be able to meet our members expectations for a great hiking experience.

Organizing a local and out of town hike takes hours, sometimes days or week of planning. Trails must be evaluated, permits obtained, and equipment and supply requirements determined. Hikes are offered beginning though advanced to meet the needs of our communities at all levels. For challenging events in rugged terrain or higher elevations a series meetings as well as training and conditioning hikes may be required.

Kids in Need of Nature events require even more preparation and leadership skills. Only our most experienced Hike Organizers are selected for these events.

Volunteers also are the core of our Wildflower Fest activities, conducting hikes and clinics on a wide range of outdoor topics

The value contributed by these volunteers is huge. Well over 10,000 hours were volunteered in 2011. The non-profit resource organization Independent Sector estimates the value of that time at \$24.18 per hour. That adds up to nearly a quarter of a million dollars in value, and it doesn't even include the time of assistants (sweeps) and mentors, who also add value to events.

In July, OCHC received a Spotlight Award nomination for our efforts to "positively impact the physical activity, fitness and well-being of California's children and youth." This award was earned by our volunteers. Thank you.

ORANGE COUNTY HIKING CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Suki Reed, President

Suki Reed is an advocate for nature, outdoor education, and the need to keep America's most at risk children active. Hiking is a passion for Suki, who hikes regularly and has climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Africa. Each year she also climbs her favorite local Southern California peaks and Mount Whitney.



Neil Fricke, Vice President

Neil Fricke is a retired Licensed Customs Broker. He is a native Californian, born in San Diego and raised in LA county. Neil describes his favorite hike, Sturtevant Falls: "After hiking a steep trail down to the canyon plateau you will enter a magical canopy of oaks and alders resting alongside a winding stream. We follow the stream up to a group of rustic cabins. These historical cabins are serviced by pack mules from the station at Chantry Flats. After crossing the winding stream, the hike culminates at a natural rock basin fed by lush 50 foot waterfalls. In this moss-coated world, it is easy to forget that civilization is only a stone's throw away!"



Larry Beck, Secretary

Larry is a semi-native Californian, born in Kansas City, Missouri but moved to California at three months old. Larry developed a love for backpacking in the Boy Scouts. He has struggled to keep his backpack weight down to a manageable level. He can't seem to let go of some of those creature comforts, but is finding ultra-light accessories that help reduce the weight.



Mike Cabourne,

Mike has been an avid hiker for many years and typically participate in five hikes per week. Most of these are local conditioning hikes but he likes venturing out into the San Gabriels, desert regions, and southern Utah for out of state hikes. His favorite adventures have been rafting the Grand Canyon and a safari into the back country of Belize.

OUR SUPPORT

Member and Community Support

Gifts of under \$35 Over four hundred people made donations of \$35 or less in 2011. These gifts added up to about 12% of total giving

Trail Partners (\$35 to \$75) Donations in this category totaled over \$18,000 or about 35% of all gifts. Trail Partners are eligible to attend club sponsored trips and may add their name or company to the OCHC Business Directory.

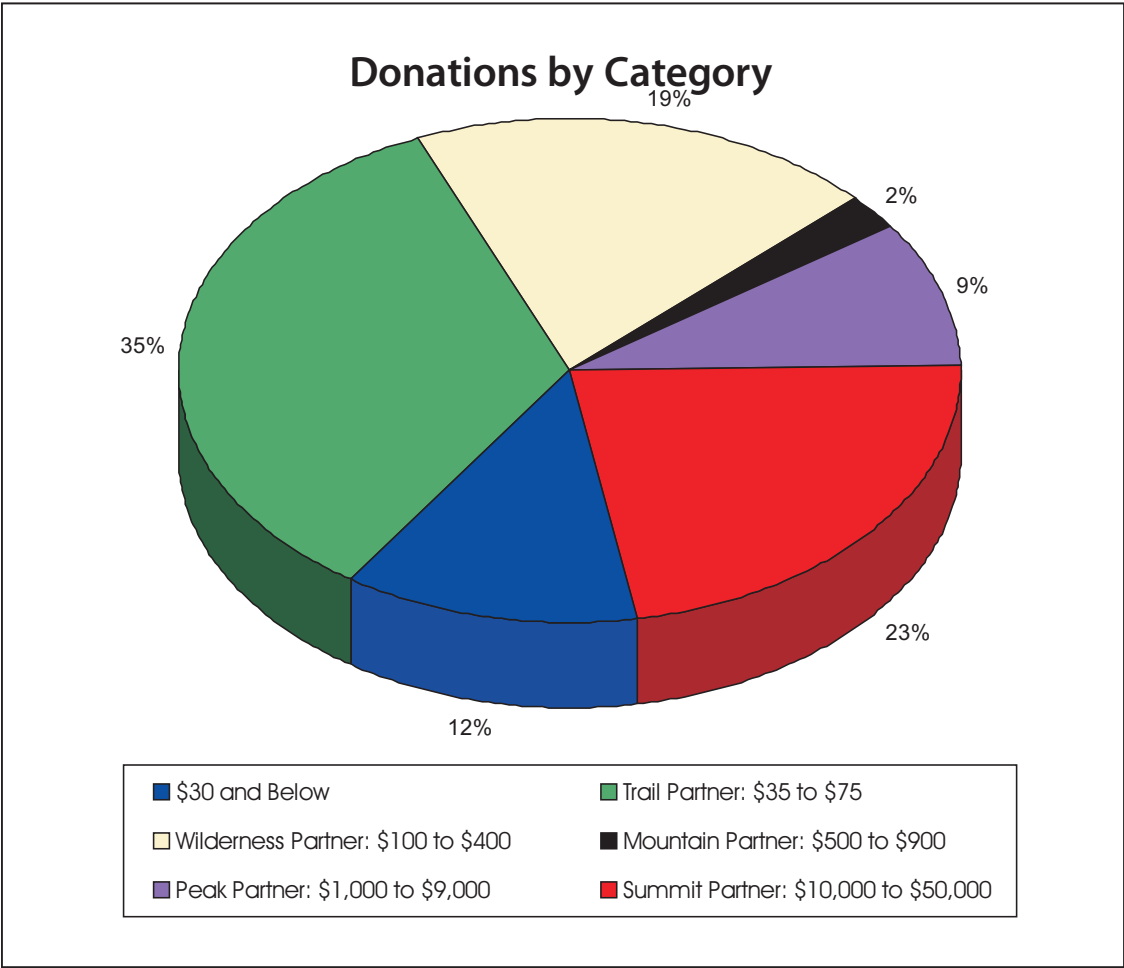
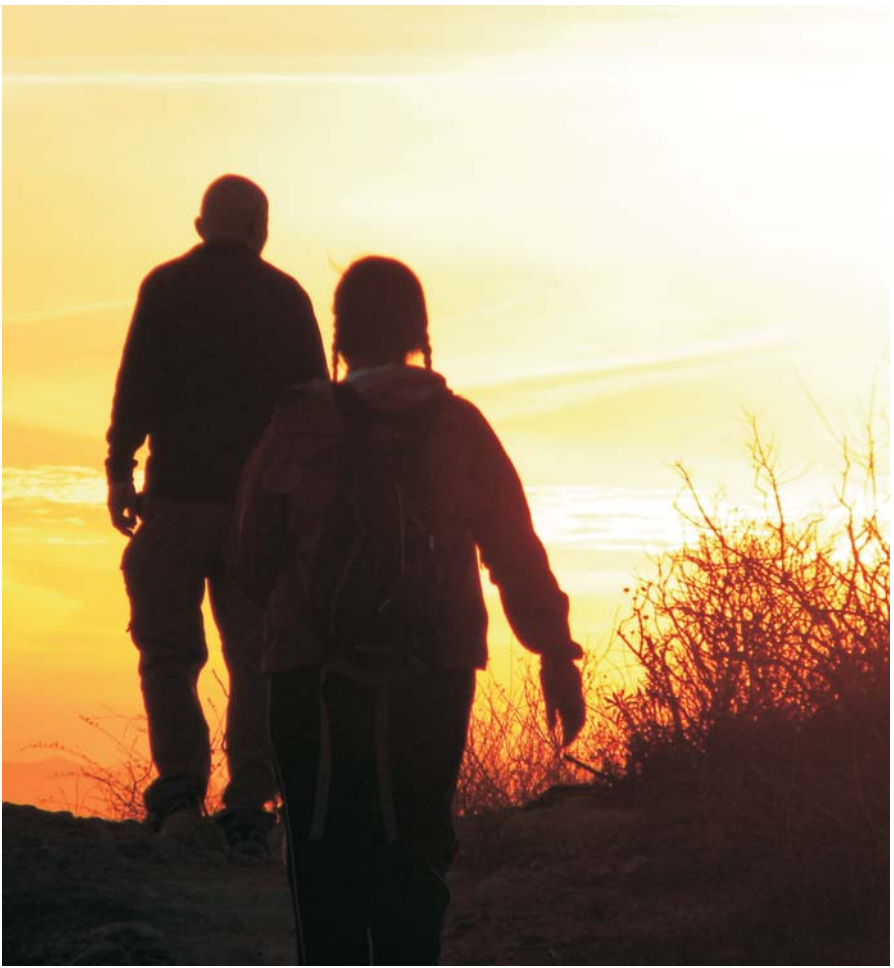
Wilderness Partners (\$100 to \$400) Wilderness Partners sponsor one or more Kids In Need of Nature on a life changing hike. Sixty-two contributors in this category accounted for 19% of total donations.

Mountain Partners (\$500 to \$900) A gift in this category allows five or more young people to participate in the Kids in Need of Nature program.

Peak Partner (\$1,000 to \$9,000) A generous grant of \$5,000 from REI to help launch our Trail Guardians program is reflected in this category.

Summit Partner (\$10,000 to \$50,000) An ongoing contribution from OC Parks in this category constituted twenty-three percent of our financial support for 2011. This generous gift made a significant impact on our core programs, giving Kids In Need of Nature life changing outdoor nature experiences.

Thank you for serving your community, promoting wellness and reconnecting kids with nature!



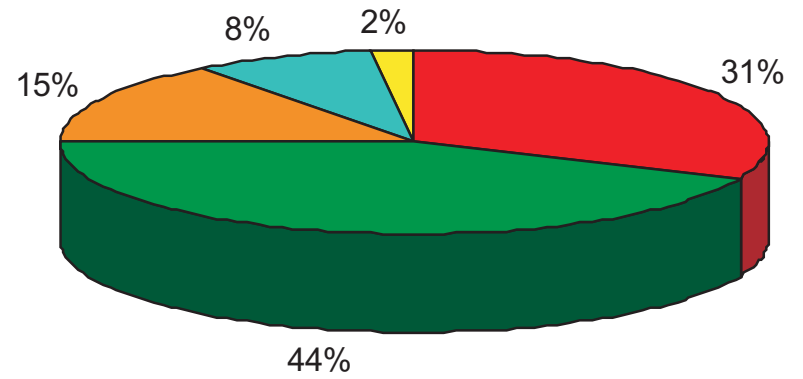
Number of Contributors

\$30 and Below	430
Trail Partner: \$35 to \$75	438
Wilderness Partner: \$100 to \$400	61
Mountain Partner: \$500 to \$900	2
Peak Partner: \$1,000 to \$9,000	1
Summit Partner: \$10,000 to \$50,000	1
Total	933



USE OF RESOURCES

USE OF RESOURCES BY PROGRAM



- Kids in Need of Nature
- Inspiring and Empowering Families, Adults & Children
- Southern California Wildflower Fest
- Southern California Wildflower Photo Contest
- Trail Guardians



Use of Funds

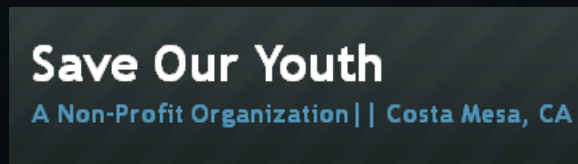
	2011	2010
Professional Fees	18,047	11,100
Club Management Fees	13,003	1,000
Special Events	12,689	10,680
Promotion Expense	3,518	4,318
Insurance	2,547	2,145
Field Expenses	1,886	1,244
Training & Program Expense	1,237	3,906
Printing, Postage & Shipping	1,255	2,054
Fees & Service Charges	1,070	1,223
Dues and Memberships	135	887
Total Expenses	55,387	38,557

THE FUTURE

*“For I dipped into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be.”*

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR BUSINESS & COMMUNITY PARTNERS



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