

SCV Trail Users shape new trail in Placerita Canyon

 EMILY ALVARENGA

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Dozens of volunteers with the Santa Clarita Valley Trail Users worked to create a new multi-use trail in the Golden Valley Ranch Open Space Sunday.

“This is city open space, and with their approval, we’ve designed multi-use trails, so these are for hikers, equestrians, mountain bikers — most anything that’s non-motorized,” SCV Trail Users chairman Ken Raleigh said.

The SCV Trail Users is a committee of the nonprofit Concerned Off-Road Bicyclists Association, who work year-round to not only create new trails, but also maintain existing ones.



Trail Users volunteers swing digging tools on a unkempt trail in the Golden Valley Ranch Open Space off Placerita Canyon Road to assist in making the trail safe and enjoyable for future hikers, Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020. Gilbert Bernal/The Signal



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Many of the city’s multi-use trails can be very crowded during the busy season, so there is a big demand for new trails, Raleigh added.

“The city (of Santa Clarita) is trying to link all these trails together,” volunteer Randy Geniec added. “And, the master plan is to make it to where they can link one open space to another.”

Sunday’s project is the result of an agreement between the SCV Trail Users and city of Santa Clarita officials, according to Raleigh. The trail begins at the parking lot on Placerita Canyon Road and will be about a mile long before connecting to other trails at the top of the hill.



Volunteers trekked out to the Golden Valley Ranch Open Space to assist Trail Users extend a portion of the current pathway that snakes through the hills off Placerita Canyon Road, Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020. Gilbert Bernal/The Signal

“The city is really great to work with,” Raleigh added. “They just make it really easy, and they buy a lot of space, so it’s really good for the community, and we’re always very thankful to work with them like that.”

Volunteers, like Geniec and his 13-year-old son, often work on trails they enjoy using. Both Geniec and his son are avid mountain bikers and part of the Santa Clarita Composite, a National Interscholastic Cycling Association mountain bike team in the SCV — Geniec as a coach and his son as a rider.

These volunteers worked from 8 a.m. until noon, first determining the perfect path for the trail, then cutting down brush and leveling it out.

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Trail Users volunteers met at the Golden Valley Ranch Open Space trail off Placerita Canyon Road to help widen the trail and manicure the area for future trail users to have a safe and enjoyable experience while hiking on the trail, Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020. Gilbert Bernal/The Signal.

“The idea is (that) you want to build it once — you don’t want to keep coming back and fixing stuff,” Geniec said. “These trails are wide and they’re at an angle so that they can shed water.”

When volunteer Jose Gonzalez maps the route, he uses an inclinometer as he makes his way up the hill to ensure the trail isn’t too steep.

“If it’s more than 9%, it ruts out,” Geniec added. “That’s also why the trail meanders the hillside, and it doesn’t go straight up.”

Though only a handful of volunteers work to maintain these trails, SCV Trail Users encourages anyone in the community to make use of them.



Jeremy Redmond, Trail Users volunteer uses a trenching tool to widen the trail that winds through the hill off Placerita Canyon Road for future hikers to utilize along the Golden Valley Ranch Open Space, Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020. Gilbert Bernal/ The Signal

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Bill Baker, Trail Users volunteer assisted the trail making team along with his 5-year-old son Eligh, out on the Golden Valley Ranch Open Space trail off Placerita Canyon, Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020. Gilbert Bernal/The Signal



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Emily Alvarenga

Emily Alvarenga covers features and business for The Signal. She's new to the paper and Santa Clarita, but hasn't moved far from her hometown of Temecula, California. Emily graduated from San Diego State University in 2017 and has been writing and reporting since high school.

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