



A bicyclist moved quickly along a Carbon Canyon trail in late-afternoon sunlight last week.

Jack E. Hancock Brea Progress

PATHWAY TO PRESERVATION

City of Brea, activists targeting protection of Wildlife Pathway

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Brea Progress

A deer steps timidly from the brush, its large eyes darting back and

blinking as a hawk screeches overhead.

No, this is not a scene from an episode of "National Geographic," but an overview of everyday events in an expanse bordering Brea and surrounding cities called the Wildlife Corridor.

This "corridor" is an expanse of land that is home to many small and large creatures.

hand-in-hand with the Wildlife Corridor Conservation Authority (WCCA) to help ensure that this corridor around Brea remains a haven for wildlife who call that area home.

Former Brea City Council member Glenn Parker donated a great deal of time to the cause and current Mayor Pro Tem Bev Perry and Councilwoman Lynn Daucher have voiced concerns regarding the

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continuing efforts that the corridor remains a closely watched reserve.

WCCA board member Jeff Yan explained that the corridor actually consists of two parts, with core reserves where animals live and narrow corridors they use to move from place to place. He is particularly concerned about the mouth of Tonner Canyon because wildlife uses the highway to cross to the other side.

One proposed solution is to build an underground passage way so animals can cross safely and never have to step out into the open. This process was used in several surrounding county areas and has shown marked success.

Another sphere of concern outside city limits is properties in Coal Canyon and La Mancha. Perry, who chairs WCCA, said that if those properties are not purchased for conservation, "... the corridor will be broken."

Brea Fire Chief Bill Simpkins cited a fuel modification program, through which efforts are being made to control fuels that could cause problems in the area.

"We are in conversation with that group (WCCA) about what we can do to help their efforts," Simpkins said, noting that

Brea has a large corridor which, with input from residents and continuing efforts of elected officials and activists, may remain a place of beauty for future generations to enjoy

homeowners can do their parts by keeping yards clear of debris and cutting back dry overgrowth.

"A certain amount of responsibility falls on the homeowner," Simpkins said.

Yan agreed, saying it was up to citizens to elect officials who hold the corridor as a prime area of concern.

"The richness of the area is why people come here in the first place," Yan noted.

There are several things to consider before making the decision to live or develop in the corridor. Homeowners must be willing to live with wildlife and keep in mind that the animals were there first.

Residents are urged to keep small animals inside at night and to use common sense when it comes to such questions as feeding hill dwellers. Also, people have to become aware that animals may be prone to wandering onto private property.

Perry noted that would-be developers must show how they



Trails around Carbon Canyon Regional Park are visited by wildlife.

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plan to develop without having negative impacts on the corridor.

"The corridor is an integral part of our planning," she said, noting that the city keeps a close eye on activity in the area to see how wildlife is being impacted.

Brea residents are encour-

aged to help with conservation: Perry said the WCCA is slowly raising money to purchase Coal Canyon and La Mancha properties to keep them within the corridor. She said citizen efforts include grass roots volunteerism, including volunteering to sit on the board.

Persons interested in helping conserve the corridor may call Perry or her staff at (714) 990-7700. WCCA representatives expressed hope that a proposal in Sacramento will be approved to provide more funds for purchase of Mancha/Coal Canyon properties.

Claire Schlotterbeck, a Brea resident who sat on the WCCA board for many years and is

now president of the group Hills for Everyone, said she hoped the corridor would never experience problems seen at a Chino Hills development. There, a small wildlife pond was built into the middle of a busy apartment complex in hopes that surrounding animals would use it.

However, "Critters are not going to use something that close to humans," Schlotterbeck noted, sadly.

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