



Seven Years of Accomplishments and Milestones (Updated November 2007)

1998-2000 Sierra Club launches San Diego Canyons Campaign for development of Canyon “Friends Groups”(organized canyon stewardship groups), in response to the Metropolitan Waste Water Department plans to build sewer-access roads through the floors of canyons all over the city. Due to public outcry, the City stalled the MWWD plans and established the Sewer/Canyon Access Task Force to make environmentally sensitive recommendations for canyon access.

2000 San Diego philanthropists such as Deborah Szeke, Vicki Granowitz, and Stan Chu provide start-up funding for the infant campaign. Sierra Club hires Eric Bowlby as part-time Canyons Campaign Coordinator.

2000 The San Diego Foundation awards a grant to give the Canyons Campaign a major boost. Sierra Club makes Canyons Campaign Coordinator a full time position.

2000 The Sierra Club, San Diego Canyons Coalition is established to provide a network for Canyon Groups to collaborate, learn from one another and support each other.

2001 (October 6) Mayor Murphy proclaims “Canyon Watch Day” recognizing Canyon Groups for actively inspecting sewer infrastructure in the canyons and reporting sewer leaks early, -before they become catastrophic spills.

2002 City adopts Sewer/Canyon Access Task Force recommendations and establishes the Open Space/Canyons Advisory Board as part of those recommendations.

2003 Canyon groups join watershed alliances for Rose Creek and San Diego River.

2004-2005 City establishes Open Space Department and hires a Deputy Director, Park Planner, Trail Planner, and two Rangers to work with Canyon Groups.

2005 (Milestone) Author Richard Louv releases book, Last Child in the Woods, Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder, and points to unique opportunities in San Diego to provide “Nature Classrooms” and access to nature for kids. Louv highlights the mental and physical health benefits of access to nature in the early stages.



2005 San Diego Canyons Coalition Receives "Be a Friend Award" from the San Diego Friends of Parks and Recreation Foundation.

2006 (March 14) Author Richard Louv presents the San Diego Regional Canyonlands Park concept in an editorial in the Union Tribune.

2006 Canyon Enhancement Guidelines drafted by City Rangers declares: "... the Friends of Canyons groups are an essential component of assisting with the long range management of our City's canyons."

2006 San Diego Civic Solutions Canyonlands Committee, (including Sierra Club Canyons Campaign Coordinator Eric Bowlby), release the Canyonlands white paper to present strategies for Canyons preservation, enhanced access and promote the concept of a San Diego Regional Canyonlands Park.

2006 (June 28th) City Councilwomen Toni Atkins and Donna Frye begin to explore ways to make the San Diego Regional Canyonlands Park a reality. Atkins docket a Canyonlands Committee white-paper presentation before the Natural Resources & Culture Committee (NR&C). "Dedication" of city-owned Canyonlands is presented as a key step toward establishing the park. Council members direct city staff to produce list of city-owned parcels eligible for "Dedication".

2006 (November) Staff returns to NR&C Committee with a report showing 17,000 acres of city-owned land is eligible for dedication, -most of which is Canyonlands, but process is time-consuming and expensive.

2006 Boy Scouts work with Campaign to restore habitats and earn badges.

2006 Campaign partners with SDSU Service Learning Program.

2007 Campaign launches High School Community Service Program to allow students to earn required credits by helping with projects in their neighborhood canyons.

2007 (July) Campaign partners with Audubon and Harmonium After-School Program to launch the "Harmonium Nature" program.

2007 (October 13) Governor Schwartznaeger signs bill written by Senator Christine Kehoe dedicating 7,000 acres of city-owned land, (most of which is Canyonlands), in law saving the city \$1 million in "Dedication" costs. Senator Kehoe said: "Protecting our urban canyons has been a priority of local residents, community groups, and environmental organizations throughout the city," said Kehoe. "This law enables residents and the city to realize their longstanding goal of protecting these areas."