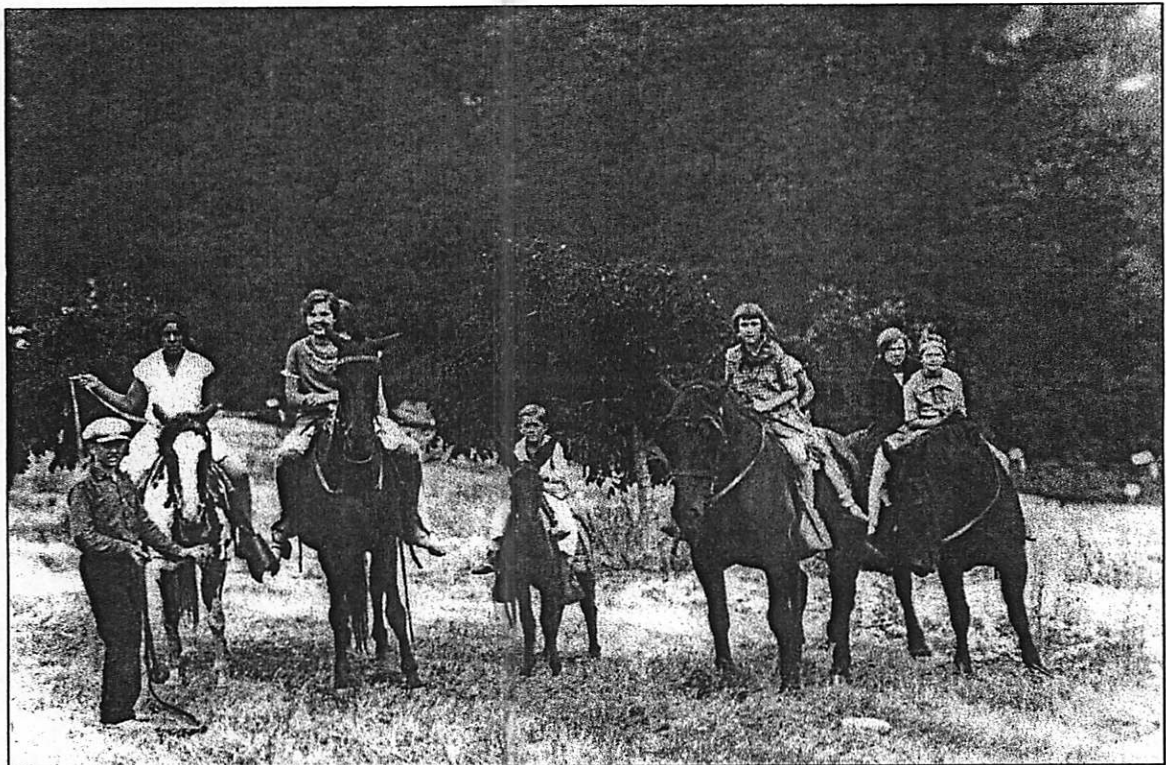
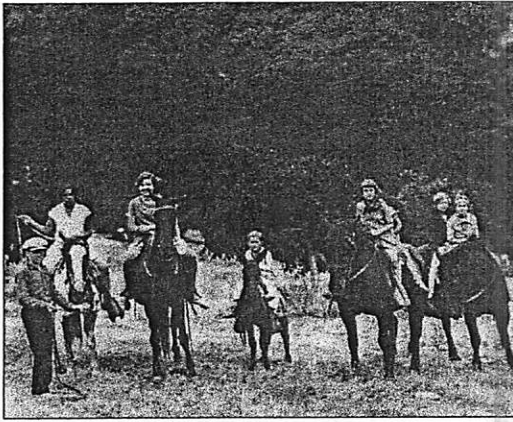


SECTION 3
EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



TOPANGA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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TOPANGA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

"If I had influence with the good fairy who is supposed to preside over the christening of all children, I should ask that her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life, as an unfailing antidote against the boredom and disenchantments of later years, the sterile preoccupation with things that are artificial, the alienation from the sources of our strength."

— Rachel Carson

GOALS:

- Promote greater awareness and understanding on the complex relationships between humans and the watershed so as to preserve native biodiversity and natural processes.
- Coordinate Federal, State and County regulations to provide a comprehensive, integrated management plan.
- Encourage agencies and utilities to adhere to the same guidelines and regulations as non-governmental agencies and citizens.
- Develop an outreach program to inform residents of flood and fire hazards and ways to protect themselves.
- Provide a community forum for education regarding Best Management Practices which can reduce the flood and fire hazard.
- Provide a cooperative forum encouraging coordinated voluntary efforts to minimize the flood and fire hazard.
- Evaluate existing risks to public safety and develop programs to address them.

Introduction

The key to any voluntary management effort is to provide all the stakeholders with the information they need to make necessary decisions that protect the long-term viability of the watershed. There is an old saying that we love and protect only what we know. From the children to the seniors, from the bulldozer drivers to the policy makers, it is important that each individual knows how important their actions are, and understands how to make choices that sustain the entire community, both human and wild.

ACTIONS:

- 3.1 Develop watershed consciousness as a rich diverse model of community.
- 3.2 Publicize that the events/proposals in the Santa Monica Mountains/Topanga affect the health of the local ocean waters and their ability to be utilized for recreation, fishing, etc.
- 3.3 Reach out to all stakeholders including the people of CA and beyond, since loss of biodiversity, threatened species, and watershed are regional issues.
- 3.4 Have experts address community meetings on issues of concern.
- 3.5 Coordinate with local schools to provide hands-on watershed education and service learning opportunities.

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- 3.6 Disseminate information to all affected property owners as recommended by the Community Rating Service Repetitive Loss Plan including: the design manual for retrofitting flood prone residential structures; information on elevating residential structures; the handbook on flood emergency and residential repair; and information on flood-proofing techniques and systems. Coordinate with T-CEP.
 - 3.7 Prevent illegal dumping by limiting vehicle access, placing appropriate signage, imposing and enforcing penalties (fines, misdemeanor offense). Develop an anti-dumping campaign, focusing on rewards, heightened public education, signage, and a hot-line to reduce this form of pollution. Pursue grant money to fund these efforts. See also Water Quality.
 - 3.8 Coordinate volunteers to provide hands-on implementation of Best Management Practices.
 - 3.9 Identify what agency is to be called when a problem is identified, establish a response time and create a list of agreed upon possible responses.
 - 3.10 Identify, cultivate, and preserve natural foods and medicines.

Recommendations that require legal or political action: None

Priority actions or research that still need funding or further investigation:

- 3.11 Establish demonstration sites for detention basins and holding ponds.
- 3.12 Continue watershed education classes at Topanga Elementary School.
- 3.13 Continue funding for the Topanga Creek Watershed Education Coordinator
- 3.14 Continue training workshops for road maintenance crews on tree pruning and Best Management Practices.
- 3.15 Continue workshops on topics of concern for the entire watershed community.
- 3.16 Continue on-going education efforts with flyers, brochures and other information provided to new and present residents of the watershed.
- 3.17 Continue to expand the existing early warning system to provide maximum communication to the community during disasters. Comprehensive disaster management including preparation, prevention, planning, warning and response has clear social and economic benefits.

References:

Community Rating Service Repetitive Loss Plan, FEMA. 1990.

Living Lightly in the Watershed Brochure. Topanga Creek Watershed Committee, 2001.

Simple Ways To Clean the Creek, RCD of the Santa Monica Mountains, 1998.

Topanga Creek Watershed Curricula, 2001

www.TopangaOnline.com

www.CREEC.org

Supplementary Information:

The Topanga Creek Watershed Management Plan will require a long-term education and maintenance program of Best Management Practices to be successful. Education efforts need to be directed at responsible agencies, local schools, and property owners in order to be successful. Continued development of community workshops on topics of interest, as well as implementation of the Topanga Creek Watershed Curricula at local schools is needed. Development of additional service learning opportunities is also envisioned.

Maintenance is the responsibility of both residents and public agencies. Working together with a common purpose should reduce costs and provide greater protection for sensitive stream resources. Clearly defined methods for conducting maintenance need to be identified and agreed upon by both the residents and public agencies. Maintenance practices which can reduce the flood hazard include those related to: road shoulder, bridge, and stream crossing maintenance; stream bank and channel maintenance; line clearance; protection of riparian vegetation; eradication of channel clogging exotic flora; prevention of illegal dumping; and prescribed burns, efforts to reduce sedimentation and erosion, and to increase infiltration.

Numerous organizations in the Topanga Creek Watershed have undertaken the task of providing important educational materials and opportunities. Coordination of emergency preparedness and disaster response is ongoing. To become more familiar with what you can do to help, please contact:

Arson Watch	455-4244
Disaster Response Team	455-1452
Equine Response Team	455-3029
LA County Forestry	818-890-5719
LA County Fuel Modification Program	626-969-5205
Naturalist Training Program, RCDSMM	455-1030
Natural Resources Conservation Service	805-386-4489
T-CEP	455-3000, 4270
Topanga Canyon Docents	310-535-9400
Topanga Creek Watershed Committee	455-1030
Topanga Disaster Medical Team	455-0673

In addition, Los Angeles County Fire Station 69 has a Call Firefighter Volunteer program. To find out more about this program, stop by the Station.