



PHOTOARK
JOEL SARTORE



Joel Sartore

*National Geographic Explorer, Photographer,
and Founder of the Photo Ark*

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Frill Necked Lizard

2024 SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

EARTHDAY



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The Bill of Rights for Animals Big and Small

By Chris Lancaster
Publisher, Civic Publications

Who better to remind us of the importance of The Endangered Species Act (ESA) than Joel Sartore, award-winning, internationally acclaimed wildlife photographer for National Geographic?



He focuses and speaks publicly on conservation, and The National Geographic Photo Ark, his 17-year project to document the 20,000+ species living in the world's zoos, aquariums and wildlife sanctuaries has already been the subject of books and a PBS miniseries even though the project is far from over.

Since President Nixon signed the ESA into law in December 1973, it has become the primary law in the U.S. for protecting animal species that are at risk of harm or extinction.

So we tapped Sartore to lend his insight to help us understand where we are as we highlight the 50th anniversary of the ESA for this year's Earth Day.

"The ESA is the Bill of Rights for animals," he said, simplifying the complexities of the law. Its goal is to save any species at risk of extinction, including animals, fish, plants, reptiles and insects (like the Miami Tiger Beetle found in South Florida).

The ESA gives an equal voice to all animals. "Big or small we love them all. Every animal has the right to exist," he said.

His profound work, and that law, gives voice to species that have none in the animal kingdom. They all are worth saving and they deserve our protection. Read more about National Geographic Explorer Joel Sartore and his quest to add more images to the Photo Ark on page 23.

Click on the link below to view the Joel Sartore interview on 60 Minutes.

<https://www.joelsartore.com/gallery/behind-the-scenes/>



Endangered Florida Panther



National Geographic Explorer Joel Sartore has photographed more than 15,000 species in zoos, aquariums and wildlife sanctuaries, including this endangered Florida panther, for The National Geographic Photo Ark project.

© Photo by Joel Sartore/National Geographic Photo Ark

The Endangered Species Act: 50 YEARS LATER

By Elizabeth Smilor
Special Sections Writer

In the 1980s, there were only 38 known Bell's sparrows left flying around San Clemente Island, one of the Channel Islands off Southern California's coast. The tiny, grayish-brown bird endemic to the island was listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Last year, it was removed from the list as more than 4,000 adults now populate the island.

That's just one big success story for one small species. For the past 50 years, the Endangered Species Act has been instrumental in protecting animals and plants, huge and tiny.

"In my opinion, the Endangered Species Act was the first basic Bill of Rights for creatures other than ourselves," said Joel Sartore, National Geographic Explorer and founder of the Photo Ark project. "When they passed it, I'm not sure they understood the monumental

[See **ENDANGERED SPECIES**, page 4]

Publisher Chris Lancaster
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Endangered Species



*"There are so many success stories on the stamps. Without the ESA many would be extinct."
Joel Sartore, National Geographic Explorer, Photographer, and Founder of the Photo Ark*



A federally threatened koala, *Phascolarctos cinereus*, with her babies at the Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital.

© Photos by Joel Sartore/National Geographic Photo Ark

[ENDANGERED SPECIES, from page 2]

significance it had in terms of preventing extinction. The ramifications of this law cannot be underestimated, and there have been many runs on the law to try to get it nullified or get parts of it stricken, still to this day, ... but the bottom line is that this is a law that works."

"In my opinion, the Endangered Species Act was the first basic Bill of Rights for creatures other than ourselves."

Joel Sartore
National Geographic
Explorer, Photographer,
and Founder of the
Photo Ark

extinction, and 1,683 species are currently under ESA protection. On a global scale species loss is much greater.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service administer the ESA. In testimony

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) was enacted by President Richard Nixon on Dec. 28, 1973. The ESA is credited with saving 99% of listed species from extinction in the U.S. To date, more than 100 species have been removed from the list due to recovery or reclassified from endangered to threatened. However, 32 have been delisted due to



Vulnerable Horsfield's tarsier, *Cephalopachus bancanus borneanus*, at Taman Safari.

[See ENDANGERED SPECIES, page 20]

Make Every Day Earth Day



A great blue heron at Rio Hondo Spreading Grounds, which uses recycled water to replenish groundwater.

We all have a role in protecting our planet. The Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts help protect the environment by converting sewage into clean water and waste into recycled commodities and green energy.

You can help:



Properly dispose of your household hazardous and electronic waste at one of our free local roundups (www.lacsd.org/hhw).



Throw trash away and recycle paper, cans, bottles, and other recyclables.



Take unwanted drugs to a take-back center near you (www.nodrugsdownthedrain.org).

For more ways to be green, visit www.lacsd.org/begreen.



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Los Angeles County Celebrating Earth Day

Earth Day serves as a powerful reminder of the collective responsibility to protect and preserve our planet. The effects of climate change, pollution, and diminishing natural resources are being felt universally. However, through education and accessible resources, everyone can be empowered to take meaningful steps towards sustainability.

Visit www.CleanLA.com, a one-stop destination for individuals, businesses, and organizations looking to adopt eco-friendly practices to make a positive impact in their community. Remember, conscious choices can benefit both the environment and future generations.



RECYCLING FOR THE WIN

Los Angeles County Public Works, the Dodgers Foundation, and iHeart Media have teamed up to promote recycling on a grand scale. In a collaborative effort, LA County Public Works, and the Dodgers Foundation encourage recycling through a beverage container recycling challenge to Little League teams in Los Angeles County who are part of the Dodgers Dreamteam. The challenge motivates teams and their families to recycle eligible California Redemption Value (CRV)

beverage containers during their Little League season. The top three teams get a special invite to Dodgers Stadium, where an athlete from the winning team throws the first pitch. But it's not just about the competition; through various outreach and education campaigns, LA County continues to educate residents and businesses on the importance of recycling. We all have a part to play in creating a future with less waste.



Many common household products contain chemicals that are harmful to humans, animals and the environment.



TOO TOXIC TO TRASH: SAFELY DISPOSE OF HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

Los Angeles County offers residents free and convenient ways to properly dispose of unwanted items that are too toxic to trash such as paint, cleaning products, home-generated sharps and more at temporary and permanent LA County Household Hazardous and Electronic-Waste Collection (HHW/E-Waste) collection events throughout LA County.

Each year in the United States, approximately three billion home-generated sharps waste end up in the trash, recycling containers, or are flushed down the toilet. When sharps waste

is not disposed of properly, it poses a serious health risk to children, sanitation workers, and the public.

Residents can request a free mail-back sharps container from the statewide stewardship program at www.sharpstakebackcalifornia.org or visit www.CleanLA.com to find additional information and resources for proper disposal of sharps and other HHW/E-Waste.



LA COUNTY'S PLASTIC WASTE BAN: A GREEN LEAP FORWARD

Los Angeles County is taking action to reduce plastic waste and address litter in our communities and waterways. In April 2022, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors passed the Reduction of Waste from Single-Use Articles and Expanded Polystyrene Products Ordinance. This ordinance is applicable to food facilities and retail establishments within County unincorporated areas, including food facilities located within County facilities.

Under the ordinance, full-service restaurants are mandated to utilize reusable food ware for dine-in customers. Additionally, online food ordering platforms must offer customers the choice to opt-in for any single-use accessories provided by the food establishment. In unincorporated areas, food facilities such as restaurants, cafeterias, and food trucks are prohibited from offering single-use foodware accessories to customers unless specifically requested.

The ordinance also requires that single-use articles provided to customers by food facilities for ready-to-eat food must be either compostable or recyclable. Additionally, the sale of products crafted from expanded polystyrene, commonly known as Styrofoam™, is banned under the ordinance. These measures represent a significant stride towards promoting sustainability and reducing environmental impact in Los Angeles County. For more information visit www.CleanLA.com

LA COUNTY'S PROACTIVE MEASURES AGAINST ILLEGAL DUMPING

In many communities across Los Angeles County, illegal dumping poses a significant challenge. Not only does it endanger public health and safety, but overall community well-being. The materials that are illegally dumped create a nesting area for rodents and insects and impacts the drainage of runoff

water. This contaminated runoff eventually finds its way to local beaches, polluting them and threatening the diverse wildlife that call these areas home. The financial burden of cleaning up these illegal dumps costs millions of dollars annually.

To address this issue, Los Angeles County is committed to providing illegal dumping prevention programs aimed at maintaining clean and safe environments for communities. Additionally, the County conducts advertising campaigns to educate businesses and residents about proper disposal methods.

Several times a year in County unincorporated areas, residents have the opportunity to dispose of large volumes of unwanted debris at no cost. Incorporated cities may also offer this service. Individuals are encouraged to reach out to their waste hauler for more information and to schedule bulky-item pick-ups. By working together, we can ensure cleaner, healthier communities for all.

For more information and resources about recycling, sustainability and to report instances of illegal dumping, visit www.CleanLA.com or call our hotline at (888) CLEANLA / (888)-253-2652.



WATER FOR LA

Water for LA is the County's trusted source of information for all things water. From understanding the journey of water as it travels from the State Water Project or from rainfall into LA County's world-class system of dams and spreading grounds and eventually into local businesses and homes. Or to learn what the County is doing to capture even more stormwater, like building multi-benefit stormwater capture projects that also feature green space and recreational elements. Water For LA also provides storm preparedness and water conservation tips and resources, and updates on water-related developments from across the region. Water For LA is a program to transform LA County residents into empowered, informed water advocates. Visit www.waterforla.com to learn more.





Servicon Setting the Sustainability Standard

Specialized Cleaning Company Creates Healthy Spaces



"At Servicon, we embrace our purpose of elevating the industry and providing healthy environments for people to thrive."

Laurie Sewell
Servicon President & CEO

Servicon, a pioneer in green cleaning, is stepping up its commitment to sustainable practices for the benefit of its employees, clients and the community at large.

"At Servicon, we embrace our purpose of elevating the industry and providing healthy environments for people to thrive," said Servicon President and CEO Laurie Sewell. "Our commitment to sustainability is not just about minimizing our environmental footprint; it's about creating a healthier, more sustainable future for our employees, clients, partners, communities, and the planet."

Based in Culver City, Servicon is a leading provider of specialized cleaning and facility maintenance services for the aerospace, healthcare, government and municipal, life science, and commercial sectors nationally. It was founded in Los Angeles in 1973 by Richard Mahdesian, the son of Armenian refugees. Servicon remains family owned and is also WBENC-certified women owned and operated social enterprise.

Founder Richard Mahdesian's philosophy was "Doing well by doing right," which has sustained Servicon's success as a recognized industry leader for 50 years. About 25 years ago, Servicon began investigating and transitioning to green cleaning products.

"We were the first to adopt and then exclusively use sustainable products. We really were the first company to do what is now called green cleaning," said Servicon Director of Corporate Affairs and Communications Gregory Mahdesian. "For almost half our existence, we've been a green company. We've convinced skeptical clients that it doesn't sacrifice quality it improves it. They completely get it now and believe us having seen it first-hand."

In August 2023, Servicon inaugurated its Sustainability Council, a steering body dedicated to reinforcing its commitment to sustainability within the framework of Servicon's operations. Servicon's headquarters was the first LEED Platinum-certified building in Culver City. They've installed solar panels and energy-efficient lighting and other systems throughout their facilities. Now, they're aiming for an all-electric fleet of vehicles and repaving all their facility parking lots with "cool" pavement that reflects



Gregory Mahdesian



Servicon, based in Culver City, is a family-owned company that pioneered green cleaning and is now advancing sustainable practices for their clients across the healthcare, aerospace, municipal, life science and commercial sectors.

UV light and lowers the ambient temperature. And as Servicon makes these sustainable transitions, the company looks at how to help clients and communities do the same.

"Being sustainable is both a better product and better business for the client, community and the employees because we're using products that don't have negative health impacts. In fact, they improve the health of a facility," said Mahdesian. "It's not just cleaning for appearance, but cleaning for health."

"We were the first to adopt and then exclusively use sustainable products. We really were the first company to do what is now called green cleaning."

Gregory Mahdesian
Servicon Director of
Corporate Affairs and
Communications

Servicon has earned the Cleaning Industry Management Standard for Green Building (CIMS-GB) With Honors certification from ISSA, the worldwide cleaning industry association, for eight years. Servicon President and CEO Sewell is the 2024 vice president and 2025 president of ISSA, taking the company's expertise to drive sustainable changes industry-wide.

"Servicon cares about sustainability, the environment, our customers, and the community," said Servicon Safety Director Carlos Janer. "We ensure the material and supplies are as environmentally friendly as possible so they contribute to healthy workplaces, and don't damage the environment. The certification is one way to show all our stakeholders – our employees, clients, and potential customers – we are serious about this."

Gregory Mahdesian chairs Servicon's new Sustainability Council and also sits on the advisory board for Climate Resolve, LA's premiere sustainability organization that works with governments, nonprofits, businesses, and communities to address the global problem of climate change with local action. Servicon has partnered with Climate Resolve to offer grant-writing assistance to underserved areas, so they can tap into federal and state dollars for improvements such as planting trees, ensuring clean water, and retrofitting buildings with sustainable fixtures that save residents money on their energy bills and dramatically decrease their carbon emissions.

Servicon has also worked with Tree People to donate and plant trees. To date, Servicon has funded the planting of more than 100 trees through Tree People. All the trees were planted in shade-less urban "bright spots" in underserved communities where many Servicon employees live and work.

"As we look ahead, Servicon remains dedicated to partnering with our clients to help them achieve their sustainability goals," said Sewell. "Whether it's through waste reduction, energy efficiency, water conservation, or eco-friendly supplies and equipment selection, we are committed to working hand in hand with our clients to create a more sustainable future for all."

As Servicon looks to the next 50 years, they endeavor to help clients and communities discover and implement innovative sustainability solutions that will benefit business, quality of life and the planet. ○

To learn more about Servicon, visit
www.servicon.com

servicon

Click on the link below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_bmrP-WMTU





At left, Priceless Pets Rescue City of Industry Adoption Center Manager Sarai Dominguez holding Jack, on left, and Morning Cleaning Manager Dayanara Távira holding Demo at the City of Industry State of the City event in March. Above, Priceless Pets Executive Director and Co-Founder Lisa Price, left, with City of Industry Mayor Pro Tem Cathy Marcucci at the rescue's grand opening in August.

City of Industry: New Home to Priceless Pets Rescue

By Elizabeth Smilor
Special Sections Writer

"Cathy [Marcucci] put her heart and soul into finding a facility for Priceless Pets and helping them open a location in the City of Industry."

Mayor Cory Moss
City of Industry

This Earth Day, City of Industry leaders encourage us to appreciate all creatures, including pets.

The City welcomed the non-profit Priceless Pets as the San Gabriel Valley's first no-kill rescue last August. The City donated the 3,560 square-foot facility just adjacent to City Hall. Mayor Cory Moss featured the new business at the annual State of the City luncheon on March 21 at Pacific Palms Resort. The theme of the event was "The Heart of Business."

"There are so many animal lovers at City Hall. City staff regularly donate items and come in to check in on the animals and volunteer," said Adoption Center Manager Sarai Dominguez, who was at the State of the City event with two dogs available for adoption from the rescue.

Perhaps the biggest animal lover and the person who was instrumental in bringing Priceless Pets to the City is Mayor Pro Tem Cathy Marcucci. Mayor Moss dedicated a shoutout at the State of the City event to Marcucci, who is currently undergoing treatments in Texas for a rare form of cancer.

"Cathy put her heart and soul into finding a facility for Priceless Pets and helping them open a location in the City of Industry," said Mayor Cory Moss. "She just loves animals and has fostered and adopted so many dogs. The whole City Council got behind her goal to bring a no-kill rescue to the City. I'm happy she was able to attend the grand opening last August to see her dream become a reality."

The grand opening event on Aug. 26 drew a lot of attention and led to the adoption of 12 dogs and 2 cats.

The newest adoption center, known as "The Orphanage," is located on Rausch Road at Mayor Dave Way near City Hall. There is also a veterinary clinic next door that offers low-cost spay/neuter, microchipping and vaccines. Currently,

PRICELESS PETS RESCUE THE ORPHANAGE

City of Industry Adoption Center
15710 Rausch Road

Hours: Tuesday – Friday 12-7pm

Saturday & Sunday 12-5pm

pricelesspetrescue.org

Priceless Pets
A no-kill pet rescue

the clinic is open every other Thursday. In addition to the indoor space for the animals and volunteers, the City extended the side of the property to accommodate an outdoor dog park.

"Without Cathy Marcucci, this wouldn't have happened. The whole City Council and staff together are 100% the reason we are here. They have been so supportive," said Priceless Pets Rescue Co-Founder and Executive Director Lisa Price. "It took time to find the right facility, but then the City spared nothing in making it amazing for the animals."

The facility averages about 28 dogs and 20 cats, but could accommodate up to 75 animals, depending on their temperaments. Since August, about 30 animals a month have been adopted from the City of Industry location. While dogs and cats account for most of the rescues, Priceless Pets sometimes has small animals such as rabbits, guinea pigs and birds.

Priceless Pets also has locations in Chino Hills, Claremont and Costa Mesa. All animals are rescued from surrounding high-kill, high-access shelters, owner surrenders on a case-by-case basis, and other various circumstances. Since 2007, they have found homes for more than 15,000 pets.

"It's so great to now have Priceless Pets here to help animals find forever homes," said Industry Business Council Executive Director Joanne McClaskey. "Our City and the surrounding communities have really embraced the rescue and offered so much support."

Priceless Pets relies on donations. Some needed items include dog and cat food, towels, laundry detergent, paper towels and other cleaning supplies. Check out their Chewy.com wish list, too. To find out more about how to donate, volunteer, foster or adopt go to their website. ○

Click on the link below to view the Grand Opening and learn more about Priceless Pets:

<https://youtu.be/3N0tAdq9A0U>





View of San Gabriel Mountains on March 1, 2023
Photo courtesy of Renee Barbée

Water Quality Authority Proud to Protect Main San Gabriel Basin



"San Gabriel Valley communities are extraordinarily fortunate to have such a massive source of drinking water right beneath their feet."

Randy Schoellerman
WQA Executive Director

As the snow on the San Gabriel Mountains melts in spring, water flows downhill through waterways where it is diverted into spreading grounds to percolate into a massive groundwater bank far below the communities of the San Gabriel Valley. The Main San Gabriel Basin surface area spans 167 square miles and it lies about 100 yards beneath homes, businesses and streets.

This groundwater basin, which can store 8.6 million acre-feet of fresh water, supplies about 80 percent of the water that 1.4 million residents depend upon every day. The Main San Gabriel Basin is the primary source of drinking water for 25 cities and unincorporated areas of the San Gabriel Valley. Rainfall, snowmelt, conserved water as well as imported water fill the basin, which is managed by the Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster (Watermaster).

"San Gabriel Valley communities are extraordinarily fortunate to have such a massive source of drinking water right beneath their feet," said San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority (WQA) Executive Director Randy Schoellerman.

Since 1973, Watermaster has managed the replenishment and withdrawal of water from the Basin. In 1984, the EPA placed a large portion of the Basin on the federal Superfund cleanup list, due to industrial contamination. The State legislature established the WQA in 1993 to "to coordinate, plan, and implement groundwater quality management programs to efficiently remediate groundwater contamination and assist in preventing future contamination."

"The improper disposal and handling of chemicals for decades forced the shutdown of wells and threatened to render this huge drinking water source unsafe," said Schoellerman. "From the beginning, WQA's role has been to coordinate the cleanup of the Basin to ensure the sustainability of the groundwater supply for today and for future generations."



Above, water percolates into the Main San Gabriel Basin from the Santa Fe Spreading Grounds near the 210-605 freeway interchange. At right, the South Pasadena Wilson Treatment Facility is one of 32 active groundwater treatment plants that are integral to the cleanup coordinated by the San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority.

There are 32 active groundwater treatment plants in the San Gabriel Basin. The WQA has coordinated cleanup efforts that have resulted in the treatment of more than 2 million acre-feet of water. An acre-foot is equal to 326,000 gallons.

The cleanup coordinated by the WQA includes funding from state and federal sources as well as contributions from the responsible parties. This funding helps to lessen the burden on local ratepayers.

Watermaster manages water levels in the basin by regulating how much water can be pumped out each year, which is balanced by inflows from rainfall or imported water. The Basin is currently just below midpoint between its historic high and low points. Though variable, about 200,000 acre-feet of water is pumped from the Basin annually for use by residents as drinking water.

Meanwhile, the WQA coordinates the cleanup of the Basin to ensure safe drinking water whether the area is in a state of drought or abundance.

"As recent statewide drought conditions and variability in rainfall affect the big water picture, a sustainable Basin becomes even more important," said Schoellerman.

Through the years, new contaminants and drinking water regulations have emerged, making WQA's job as vital



today as it was at the start. PFAS (Per- and Polyfluorinated Substances), known as "forever chemicals" because they remain in the environment, are of particular concern for the WQA and throughout the nation. The California Legislature has extended the life of the WQA to July 1, 2050. The WQA will continue to safeguard one of the San Gabriel Valley's most valuable assets: The Main San Gabriel Basin aquifer. ○

Learn how the WQA is keeping your water safe and clean at www.wqa.com.



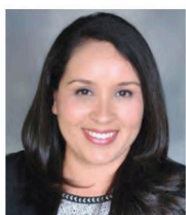
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The Sites Reservoir Project will be situated on the west side of the Sacramento Valley, approximately 10 miles west of Maxwell in Glenn and Colusa Counties.

Sites Team Intent on Building Reservoir

Manager Alicia Forsythe Speaks at Three Valleys Leadership Breakfast

By Elizabeth Smilor
Special Sections Writer

"Our vision is affordable water, sustainably managed for California's farms, cities and the environment for the future. Sites Reservoir will be the eighth largest lake in California when we build it. And I say 'when we build it,' because it is imminent. It is coming."

Alicia Forsythe
Sites Project Authority
Environmental Planning
and Permitting Manager

It's time has come. Sites Reservoir is a critical infrastructure project for California's changing water supply challenges and it needs to be built, said Sites Project Authority Environmental Planning and Permitting Manager Alicia Forsythe, to a receptive audience at the Three Valleys Municipal Water District Leadership Breakfast.

"Our vision is affordable water, sustainably managed for California's farms, cities and the environment for the future," said Forsythe. "Sites Reservoir will be the eighth largest lake in California when we build it. And I say 'when we build it,' because it is imminent. It is coming."

Forsythe was the keynote speaker at the Three Valleys event on Feb. 29 at the Kellogg West Conference Center at Cal Poly Pomona, the first of three such events planned for 2024. About 130 water and city leaders as well as representatives from the offices of several State Senate and Assembly members attended and were pleased with the project update from Forsythe.

"I love her passion for the project. If you weren't a believer, you'd be a believer after hearing her. I like her can-do attitude," said Three Valleys' Board President Jody Roberto. "I'm intrigued by all they have accomplished and by all the challenges they still face."

In her comprehensive presentation, Forsythe explained how Sites Reservoir, proposed north of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, is an off-stream reservoir that will capture and store a portion of stormwater from the Sacramento River – after all other water rights and regulatory requirements are met – and release water to communities, farms and wildlife during drier years.

"This is the natural evolution of water infrastructure. River dams, like those along the Klamath River that are being removed, have lived out their useful life. This is an off-stream reservoir," she said following the event. "We have to build tools for the future to help us adapt to climate change. Sites is just one of these tools."

The Final Environmental Impact Report for Sites was certified at the end of last year and it received judicial streamlining approval from the governor's office, which will move the permitting

"I'm intrigued by all they [Sites Team] have accomplished and by all the challenges they [Sites Team] still face."

Jody Roberto
Three Valleys'
Board President



Above, Sites Project Authority Environmental Planning and Permitting Manager Alicia Forsythe addresses an audience of about 130 people at the Three Valleys Municipal Water District Leadership Breakfast in Pomona. Below, from left to right, TVMWD Board Secretary/Treasurer Carlos Goytia, Board President Jody Roberto, Forsythe, TVMWD General Manager and Chief Engineer Matt Litchfield, Board Vice President Mike Ti, and Director Jeff Hanlon.

"It's time to get Sites Reservoir built."

Matt Litchfield
Three Valleys'
General Manager
and Chief Engineer

said. "This project has been on the books since the 1960s, so let's build it or let's put it on the shelf and retire it. We see this as a pivotal moment. It's time that we call this to question. It's time that we get this done. It's time to make the tough decisions."

If Sites were operational today, the storms of 2023 and early 2024 would have nearly filled the reservoir, which will have a storage capacity of 1.5 million acre-feet, or enough for about 4.5 million people for a year. California's water supply is expected to decline by 10 percent over the next decade.

"If we had Sites Reservoir, the back-to-back years with a 5% allocation of water from the State Water Project, might have looked much better," said Three Valleys' General Manager and Chief Engineer Matt Litchfield after Forsythe's presentation. "One thing that did stick out was she shared several times that 'it's time, it's time.' I couldn't agree more and I know there's a lot of water professionals in this room that would agree as well. It's time to get Sites Reservoir built."

Sites Reservoir, Forsythe explained, will serve as a water bank for communities, agriculture and the environment. Water agencies, including the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California with 26 member agencies including Three Valleys and others in attendance, irrigation districts, the California

process through litigation more quickly. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2026 for a 2033 completion.

"Why are we driving so hard? Because it costs a lot of taxpayer dollars. If it's not going to work, then we need to stop spending taxpayers' money," Forsythe

Department of Water Resources and the federal Bureau of Reclamation are stakeholders in the project. The state will hold 17 percent in the reservoir for environmental benefit. The project capacity is smaller than it once was in part to protect endangered salmon and wildlife refuges nearby, she said.

"It's good to know that the Sites team is sensitive to environmental concerns and working with partners to ensure that it is a co-benefit project," said Three Valleys' Director Jeff Hanlon. "I've thought a lot about Sites and this talk helped to crystallize what a major stormwater capture opportunity Sites is and how it could be the water storage we need in a climate change world. Today, we get our water predominantly from snowpack storage.

[See **SITES TEAM**, page 16]





From left to right, TVMWD Director Jeff Hanlon, Speaker Alicia Forsythe, TVMWD Board Secretary/Treasurer Carlos Goytia, President Jody Roberto and Director David De Jesus in photo on left. In middle photo, TVMWD staff: Information Technology Manager Robert Peng; Finance Manager Brittany Aguilar; and Water Resources Analyst Brian Pen. In righthand photo, San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority (WQA) Executive Assistant/Public Outreach Coordinator Stephanie Moreno, Forsythe, and WQA Board Vice-Chairwoman Lynda Noriega.

[SITES TEAM, from page 15]

By 2100, our water supply may be predominantly rain, so we need to figure out how to move from the naturally occurring snowpack storage – water as a solid to water as a liquid – off-stream.”

“It’s good to know that the Sites team is sensitive to environmental concerns and working with partners to ensure that it is a co-benefit project.”

Jeff Hanlon
Three Valleys’ Director

She said the Sites team is also working closely with the neighboring communities and plans to build a bridge across the reservoir to keep the communities connected and to make sure school buses can travel easily to schools in Maxwell from smaller towns. They are still in negotiations with landowners, she said. The most vehement opposition to the project comes from environmental protection groups and fisheries.

“We’ve waited 80 years for this. It is not a matter of money. It is a matter of willpower. We need to get it done. I hope it gets done in my lifetime,” said Rowland Water District Director John Bellah. “I’m glad to hear the governor supports it. The approach that they’re taking is constant pressure, moving forward. Sites is willing to say how it is going to work better for us and for others too, and that is going to give them the partnerships they need.”

Prior to working with the Sites Authority, Forsythe spent over 10 years with the Bureau of Reclamation. There, she oversaw operations in the Klamath and Lahontan Basins, and led the San Joaquin River Restoration Program, the largest Federally led river restoration program in the nation.

Three Valleys’ next Leadership Breakfast will be on June 27 at the Kellogg West Conference Center. O



1021 E. Miramar Avenue • Claremont, CA 91711
www.threevalleys.com

Click on the link below to view historical video:
<https://vimeo.com/616476323>



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RIDE™



CHANGE STARTS AT **HOME.**

Our workers in the Antelope Valley are changing lives and improving air quality everyday. Purposeful work done by passionate individuals driven by their ambition to make the world a better place. RIDE proudly represents our community on a local and global scale.

Contact info.na@ride.co to discover more.

Our Partnerships Include:



Real Innovation Delivered with Excellence™

*"Hope is the best resource
that we can give our kids and
action creates hope."*

Joe Haworth



Save a Butterfly, Save a Planet By Joe Haworth

Life on this planet probably began around 3 billion years ago. Our most ancient ancestors may have begun their existence in an undersea sulfur vent. We don't really know. The evolving life created organisms that produce the oxygen we breathe. They produced the atmosphere we live in. And now we are trying to keep that atmosphere from being too dangerous for much of the life on this planet.

Fifty years ago, the Endangered Species Act was passed. Little did we know that it might someday apply to us. Not since the invention of the atomic bomb, have we had the threat to our very existence stare us in the face. The buildup of carbon dioxide and methane in our atmosphere, primarily caused by our use of fossil fuels for energy, has reached a possible tipping point. We humans need energy production for survival. It powers our very existence; however, we have reached a time at which we need to find new sources of energy that are not so damaging to our planet's oceans and atmosphere.

We are experiencing the beginnings of climate change much earlier than we anticipated. The obvious manifestation is weather whiplash causing extreme heat; fire and drought; extreme storms, causing floods; and rising oceans from melting glaciers. I know, it sounds like it can be handled, that we can adapt to it with science. However, the massive damage that could be done to the human and animal kingdom could be prevented, or at least reduced, with a sufficient investment in alternative energy sources; and preparations for controlling these environmental effects.

We're not going to get off Scot-free, but the old saying, "a stitch in time saves nine" reminds us that money spent now is dwarfed by the amount we will spend repairing the damage. A trillion dollars now saves tens of trillions in the future.

For the sake of the creatures on this planet, including us, we need to take action now. We should begin by maximizing our efforts in conservation of energy, water, and other natural resources. This is always the first basic step in reducing our planetary impact, our carbon footprint, that is propelling climate change. We all hope science will continue to

progress in cleaner ways to produce the energy we all count on. You've heard about renewables and sustainability. These will become the baseline steps for animal and human survival.

If you need motivation, just take a look at the creatures in this special edition. Think about how long it took nature to make these incredible creatures take shape. Picture that beautiful Monarch butterfly that you first saw as a child. Our children are creatures too, and they need to know what steps to take so they have hope for their future. Don't rob them of that. Demonstrate the "planetary manners" that can improve their lives. Then, teach them the basic rules of conservation and sustainability. They are the ones who have to face this future environment, and they deserve to know how to contribute positively to their coming world. If we or they freeze in place, like deer in the headlights of an oncoming car, and don't act, we will get clobbered by a degrading atmosphere, and the changes it will cause.

There is a wonderful program specifically designed to inspire kids to take action. It's called Think

Earth at www.thinkearth.org. The objective, give kids hope for the future by taking action now. The lessons, grades K-6, take as little as one hour a day for one week per year. Basic conservation is at the core: save water; save energy; don't waste; conserve natural resources; recycle, reduce, reuse... Go online, Think Earth is free. Hope is the best resource we can give our kids and taking action creates hope.

Thank you, National Geographic, for reminding us what we could lose. All those pictures of nature through all those years of your publication show us it's not just that endangered butterfly, but a planet full of critters, including us. ○



Joe Haworth is the chairman of Think Earth Foundation, which offers free environmental curricula for grades K-middle school, surveys, and more. He is the former Public Information Officer for the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County.

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To Learn the Story of Our Groundwater,
Visit: thewatersthatconnectus.com



Rain, Runoff, and Drought Recovery

This Earth Day, we're sharing what's happening deep down underground, below the beauty of spring flowers in bloom. It's the story of rain, runoff and drought recovery.

Rain

The last two winters delivered much-needed rain and snow. But just like our typically dry conditions are getting drier and causing more frequent, record-breaking droughts, extreme rain events are emerging as another challenge to manage.

Our Drought Cycle Since 2000

Since 2000, our groundwater is in drought more often than not.



Source: Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster / US Drought Monitor

Runoff

Our goal always is to capture and store stormwater—when it's available. But if there's too much of this water all at once, it could be more than our stormwater systems can capture. That's when these important sources of local water are at risk of causing flooding and being lost as "runoff," never to be part of our groundwater supply.

Drought Recovery

Rain and runoff have major roles in the story of drought recovery. Even with the rains this year and last, our groundwater levels are still lower than midpoint of their historic high and low. We're not leaving our groundwater up to the weather; we all have a role in its care.



Kirtland's Warbler



Bog Turtle



California Condor

Photos courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

[ENDANGERED SPECIES, from page 4]

to Congress to mark the 50th anniversary of the ESA, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Martha Williams said:

"Looking forward, the ESA is an essential tool in conserving America's wildlife heritage. The law enables us to prevent catastrophic harm to species and provides the foundation to do the long work of redressing past harms to species. The ESA has been successful in stemming the tide of species extinctions. Almost every single species that has been protected by the ESA is still with us today, and hundreds are on the path to recovery."

Most Americans know how ESA protections and recovery efforts helped to save our national symbol: the bald eagle. Regionally, the California Condor is a tremendous success story. Lesser known are efforts to save the Wyoming toad, Munz's onion plant, the Guam kingfisher, the black-footed ferret, and hundreds more animals and plants.

Some of these animals are featured on U.S. Postal Service stamps created for the 50th anniversary of the ESA with Sartore's Photo Ark images.

"There are so many success stories on the stamps. Without the ESA many would be extinct," said Sartore, holding up the stamps and rattling off their plights. The black-footed ferret was brought back from extinction using the DNA of the last survivors. People are working every day to save the little carnivorous Wyoming toad, which lives mostly in captivity due to habitat loss and a fungal disease. The Guam kingfisher exists only in captivity as do many other South Pacific and Hawaiian island birds. "It's a miracle that these species exist today; and that miracle is the ESA."

For his part, Sartore has held an interest in endangered species since his parents gave him a Time Life Book on birds when he was young and he read about "Martha" the last passenger pigeon and other birds that went extinct on the continent before the ESA.

"I'm proud to say that there's only been one species of bird in the continental United States that's gone extinct since and that's the dusky seaside sparrow," he said. "I'd like to think that the ESA had a great deal to do with it."



Desert Bighorn Sheep

© Photo by Joel Sartore/National Geographic Photo Ark

The National Geographic Photo Ark project serves as a massive outreach and education campaign, which, in Sartore's opinion, is one shortcoming of the ESA. Both he and Williams from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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Martha Williams
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

ground. They need more funding to put plans in place and make sure that habitats are guarded, and that they can do outreach."

Habitat loss is the top threat to most species and the ESA mandates environmental reviews to reduce, eliminate

acknowledge that more funding is needed to both educate and do the work mandated by the law. Williams' testimony points out that in 2020, less than \$5,000 was reported by any state or federal agency for 27 percent of listed species.

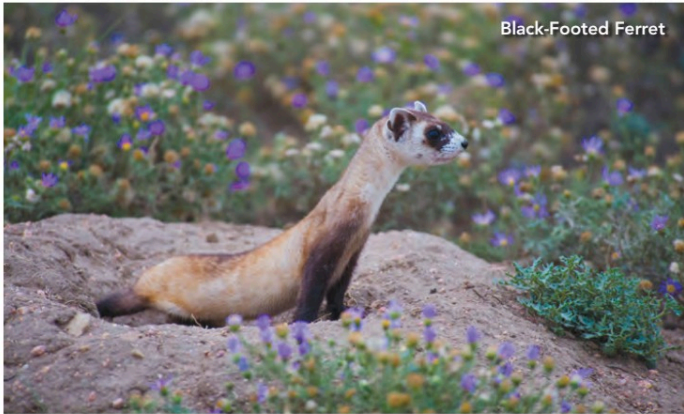
"The ESA needs more money to put into a public education campaign that highlights the beauty and value of these animals," said Sartore. "And there's not enough money to list and implement strategies on the



San Clemente Bell's Sparrow

Photo courtesy of Nicole Desnoyers/
Institute for Wildlife Studies

[See **ENDANGERED SPECIES**, page 22]



Black-Footed Ferret



Hawaiian Monk Seal



American Alligator



Hawaiian Goose

Photos courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

[ENDANGERED SPECIES, from page 21]

or minimize harm. As the human population grows, so does development. According to Williams testimony, since November 2022, the Service has received more than 87,000 requests for project reviews and the environmental review staff decreased by 20 percent between 2003 and 2022.

"In the end it really is a matter of whether people care. Without people understanding what's at risk, they're never going to be moved to save it."

Joel Sartore
National Geographic
Explorer, Photographer,
and Founder of the
Photo Ark

military bases on huge swaths of land, has saved many species. The home of the Bell's sparrow, San Clemente Island, is owned by the U.S. Navy. Their efforts to remove invasive species led to the recovery of the Bell's sparrow and four native plant species. Sartore said he recently produced an educational video for the Department of Defense.

Success comes with collaboration. Williams and Sartore both point to many hard-working volunteers, professionals and organizations preserving habitats and saving species. The Department of Defense, with

"In the end it really is a matter of whether people care. Without people understanding what's at risk, they're never going to be moved to save it," said Sartore. "That's always been my dream with the Photo Ark is that they'll look these animals in the eye, fall in love and want to save them."

Fifty years later, the Endangered Species Act remains vital. In her testimony, Williams concludes:

"The ESA is critically important as we look to the future – we face an ongoing extinction crisis and serious threats to biodiversity. The extinction crisis is accelerated by climate change and invasive species, which are making many areas of historical habitat for plants and animals unsuitable for their continued survival. Scientists estimate that as many as 1 million species are in danger of extinction, many within decades. Preventing extinctions and recovering species requires science-based conservation and investing sufficient resources to help address the growing impacts from habitat loss, climate change, and invasive species before it is too late." ○



More than 15,000 and Counting

Joel Sartore Keeps Adding Images to Photo Ark

By Elizabeth Smilor
Special Sections Writer

"With the Photo Ark, I try to get people to meet these animals, look them in the eye, and see that there's great beauty and value there. They're very worth saving."

Joel Sartore

The milestone 15,000th species photographed by National Geographic Explorer Joel Sartore for the Photo Ark project is no bigger than a sunflower seed, runs up to five miles per hour and is at risk of extinction. The Miami Tiger Beetle, which is found exclusively in the imperiled pine rocklands of southern Florida, is Photo Ark's honored insect and one of the 1,683 species on the Endangered Species (ESA) list.

"There's ESA money to save the Miami Tiger Beetle, giving them an equal voice, which is very similar to what I'm trying to do with the Photo Ark," said Sartore, reflecting on the 50th anniversary of the ESA and his own work. "We don't view (animals) in terms of size or popularity; big or small, we love them all. They all have this basic right to exist in my opinion."

Sartore, who was featured in our 2022 Earth Day publication, continues his quest to photograph the estimated 20-24,000 species in the world's zoos, aquariums and wildlife sanctuaries. He has spent more than 17 years on the National Geographic Photo Ark, a project to utilize the power of these photographs to raise awareness, educate and inspire action to help protect wildlife by supporting on-the-ground conservation efforts. He has traveled to more than 60 countries for the project, photographed more than 15,000 species, published nine Photo Ark books, started a YouTube Video Ark and addressed many live audiences. He estimates the project will take 25 years to complete.

[See **JOEL SARTORE**, page 24]



Miami Tiger Beetle
Milestone 15,000th species photographed
by National Geographic Explorer
Joel Sartore for the Photo Ark project.



Two golden snub-nosed monkeys, *Rhinopithecus roxellana*,
at Ocean Park Hong Kong.



Sinaloa shovel-headed treefrog, *Tripion spatulatus spatulatus*,
at the L.A. Zoo.

© Photos by Joel Sartore/National Geographic Photo Ark

[JOEL SARTORE, from page 23]

"With the Photo Ark, I try to get people to meet these animals, look them in the eye, and see that there's great beauty and value there. They're very worth saving," said Sartore from his home in Lincoln, Nebraska. "They're remarkable and each deserves an equal voice. That's why we use black and white backgrounds, so there's no size comparison. So, the tiger and the tiger beetle are the same size."

While Photo Ark does not exclusively feature endangered species, Sartore has held an interest in saving animals and habitats all his life. In partnership with National Geographic and its many resources, he says, the Photo Ark project is more than an archive of today's species, it's a worldwide, long-term education campaign.

"We stand guard over works of art in museums to the tune of millions and millions of dollars every year, but we're

throwing away these living works of art. That's just not acceptable to me," he said. "They are beautiful, thoughtful, intelligent beings that are basically yelling to me: 'Pay attention to us because what happens here. It won't be long before it happens to you.'"

Sartore hopes his photos inspire people to care and understand the link between human actions, habitat loss and other species. He also realizes that oftentimes even people who care don't know how to help. His suggestion: Start a pollinator garden in your yard.

"If people, especially children, get their hands dirty and touch the flowers and insects, they begin to understand how we're all connected. I think that little things lead to bigger things. But people feel so overwhelmed they don't know what to do. Every day, with our photo work, we're suggesting how people can make the world a better place."

Click on the link below to view the
Joel Sartore interview on ABC Nightline.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S8_BegbuXql&t=211s



Click on the link below to view
Joel Sartore speaking at the Richmond Forum.

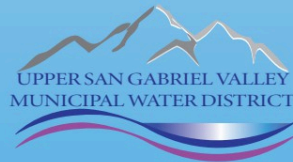
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXAh58piN08>



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or visit www.upperdistrict.org**

This Earth Day, Let's Appreciate Mother Nature's Contributions to our Water Supplies While Investing in Modern, Long-Term Water Supply Improvements

"We applaud the Department of Water Resources for advancing the Delta Conveyance Project. ...The proposed project protects the state against future water supply losses caused by climate-driven weather extremes, sea level rise, and earthquakes. ...There is no choosing between the Delta Conveyance Project and additional local supply projects – California can and must do both."

Jennifer Pierre, General Manager, State Water Contractors



Preparing for the Future: A second consecutive year of above average rain and snow has led to improved groundwater and reservoir supplies, ending the most recent statewide drought. However, in the long term, we use more water than Mother Nature provides, and drought will return. While water supplies are in abundance, it's an opportune time to prepare for future droughts. Thus, the San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District is investing in long-term solutions, maintaining its own infrastructure, promoting water conservation, and helping the public better understand water issues such as infrastructure, technology, and finances. **A case in point is the Delta Conveyance Project.**



What is the Delta Conveyance Project?

The modernization Project was planned by the Department of Water Resources to increase the reliability of the State Water Project (SWP) and to increase its ability to capture and channel stormwater to reservoirs. The Project will not increase the amount of water conveyed by the State Water Project, it will ensure that planned/allocated water is delivered more effectively. The SWP moves 50% of California's water supply through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta across the state for 27 million Californians, countless wildlife, and 750,000 acres of farmland. The Delta Conveyance Project features these new features and enhancements:

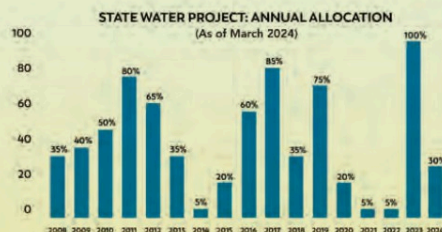
- ✓ 1 below ground tunnel to be more earthquake resilient and to protect against supply disruptions.
- ✓ 2 new intakes, T-shaped fish screens, and a pumping plant;
- ✓ Capability to withstand flood flows and sea level rise.



Why Do We Need the Delta Conveyance Project?

80% of the water we use in the San Gabriel Valley is local groundwater. 20% of the water we use is imported, primarily from northern California. Our imported supply is threatened by:

- ✓ Aging State Water Project infrastructure, including hundreds of miles of aqueduct, channels and dams, was constructed more than 50 years ago.
- ✓ Geological and hydrological weaknesses in the Delta, such as a 72% chance of a major earthquake by 2043, could cause levees in the Delta to fail.
- ✓ Climate change which may create more runoff and river flows in the winter than in past years, significant sea level rise, and reduction in the Sierra snowpack.
- ✓ Population and economic growth are increasing the demand for water.
- ✓ Fluctuations and reductions in State Water Project allocations to State Water Contractors are complicating water planning and pricing efforts at state and local levels. (see graph to the right)



What is the Status of the Delta Conveyance Project?

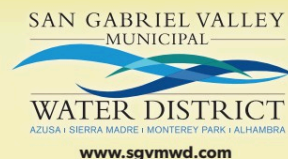
- ✓ Project planning began in early 2020.
- ✓ Comprehensive environmental studies, stakeholder outreach and public hearings have been conducted.
- ✓ The State certified the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Project in December 2023.
- ✓ Final Project plans, funding and construction will proceed for much of the next decade.
- ✓ Complete information about the Project may be found at:

www.deltaconveyanceproject.com



How is the District Supporting the Delta Conveyance Project?

- ✓ The District is one of 18 State Water Contractors supporting the Project.
- ✓ In 2020, the District invested \$2.68 million to support environmental studies for the Project.
- ✓ The District will likely consider additional investments in the Project later in 2024.
- ✓ The District will continue to provide stakeholders with information about the Project.





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Inspired by Nature



Meet Eve Li, click below:

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as seen in
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