



---

# SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
May 18, 2002

Contact: Rorie Skei  
(310) 589-3200, ext. 112

### **WOOD RANCH OPEN SPACE DEDICATED IN SIMI VALLEY**

Simi Valley—The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) dedicated a major open space park in the Wood Ranch area of Simi Valley today. At the dedication ceremony, which included a presentation of colors by Simi Valley Boy Scout Troop, and presentations by the offices of Assemblymembers Tony Strickland and Dr. Keith Richman, Joseph T. Edmiston, Executive Officer of the MRCA signed a ceremonial deed granting the property to the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District.

Title to the 463.2 acre property transferred in late December 2001 from the Long Canyon partners to MRCA, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy's joint powers partner. The transaction included an additional 506 acres to be donated six years hence, which the MRCA will lease in the interim for nominal payment, allowing it to immediately protect and manage the entire 969 acres as public open space and habitat. The Conservancy, the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District, and the Conejo Recreation and Park District formed the MRCA in the mid-1980's to help preserve open space and regional recreational opportunities in Southern California.

Wood Ranch Open Space Park is located in the rolling hills and canyons south of Wood Ranch, stretching from Long Canyon Road southward, nearly to the ridgeline of the Simi Hills. Michael Berger, Chair of the Conservancy and a board member of the MRCA, praised the generous donation, saying: "We applaud the Long Canyon Ranch Company for their generosity and foresight in gifting this truly significant property to the public for preservation for all time. Everyone benefits—Wood Ranch neighbors, Simi Valley residents, regional trail users, all those who care about natural and cultural resources protection in Southern California, and certainly the many wildlife species whose survival depends on preservation of their habitat."

The property contains a rich variety of plant types, including extensive oak woodlands, coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and grasslands. The donated land is particularly important

(more)

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy

Press Release

May 18, 2002

because it now provides a major permanent habitat and trail linkage to other parkland owned by the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District at Challenger Park, the National Park Service's China Flat at the top of the Simi Hills, and Conejo Open Conservation Agency land in Thousand Oaks to the south. Private open space held by the Bridle Path Homeowners Association also abuts the donated Long Canyon land to the east.

A trail dedicated to the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District already crosses the land, providing public access and magnificent views across Simi Valley to the Santa Susana Mountains, and southward to Conejo open space and the Santa Monica Mountains. A portion of the long-planned regional Rim of the Valley Trail is included in the acreage. The ultimate owner of the Long Canyon open space is expected to be the Rancho Simi park district, with the Conservancy and MRCA hosting a transfer ceremony later in the spring this year.