Thanks to your donations and support, the City of San Luis Obispo was able to acquire the 310-acre Froom Ranch in July 2010. With completion of a management agreement with the Federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for an adjacent 78-acre parcel, the City’s Irish Hills Natural Reserve (IHNR) grew in size by roughly 50%. This significant increase has created new recreational opportunities, especially for new trail construction.

After an eight-month planning process, the City Council adopted the Conservation Plan Update for the IHNR on July 22, 2011 to guide management of the Reserve over the next five to seven years.

The key feature of the Update is a series of provisions for passive recreation in the form of new or upgraded trails for hikers and bicyclists. Proposed improvements include 3½ miles of trails, of which 1½ miles will be new trails. The rest will consist of pruning of vegetation, making drainage improvements, and other minor adjustments to the existing system (especially dilapidated old roads accessing the Froom Mine and BLM parcel) to make them safe and usable for the public.

Certain areas with dangerous, environmentally damaging trails will be closed or rerouted. The Update calls for:

- Continued development of a trail system for pedestrians and bicyclists;
- Restoration or enhancement activities, especially along Froom Creek and on old roadways;
- Protective fencing at locations within the Reserve to protect sensitive resources in those locations;
- Vegetation management at the wildland-urban interface, especially the area between Prefumo Canyon Road and Froom Ranch Way;
- Interpretive and informational signage to assist visitors; and
- Rerouting or closure of unsafe or damaging trails.

City staff are planning several trail work days at Irish Hills this fall and winter, which will be noticed in the media. We look forward to your help!

The Froom Creek jeep road will be decommissioned on the Froom Ranch portion of IHNR. About 1½ miles of this old road became a trail in 2007, with obvious beneficial effects on the immediate environment, especially Froom Creek, a perennial stream flowing just below the road. The creek was receiving lots of silt and debris falling off of the road every winter, polluting the creek and making it hard for the native steelhead and other natives fishes to survive. This has virtually stopped and revegetation of the old road is proceeding rapidly.

City Rangers and Natural Resources look forward with excitement to the many challenges presented by these beautiful new additions to the City’s open space reserve system.
SLO CITY’S NATURAL RESOURCES

Balancing Maintenance and Habitat Needs

The Natural Resources Program is tasked with considering what impact different City projects will have on the environment, and aid in the development of those projects to ensure benefits for all.

One of the current projects is to balance flood protection and habitat enhancement. There are certain locations in our City waterways that require ongoing maintenance to maintain channel capacity during winter storms.

The outlet of Laguna Lake is an area the City is currently seeking permits from the regulatory agencies to do silt removal. When the housing tract at Oceanaire was approved in 1960, Prefumo Creek was routed through the “Storm Drainage Channel”. This is a relatively straight earthen “ditch” carrying water from Laguna Lake to San Luis Obispo Creek near Hwy 101. There is no way for gravel to be transported through the system since Laguna Lake acts as a sink for material from the upper watershed; hence the plan to dredge the lake since it is filling in.

One way we are trying to balance maintenance needs with habitat protection is by participating in silt removal projects.

The City is proposing to remove gravel and cobble from Prefumo Creek at Los Osos Valley Road, which is typically completed every 4-5 years to prevent this material from entering the lake and to open the channel to prevent flooding of the surrounding residents.

The second silt removal project will create a 10-foot wide low-flow channel below Laguna Lake so stormwater can get to the site. The channel will be over-excavated (twice as deep as is needed) and the cobble and gravel from the LOVR site will be installed in the bed. This will increase the habitat availability and complexity for the section of Prefumo Creek between Laguna Lake and SLO Creek where steelhead reside, while balancing the need for added flood protection. Both projects should be finished this fall.
**Natural San Luis Docent HIKES**
Events are free and take place **SATURDAYS** at **9AM**. Please bring water and wear sturdy shoes.
For info call ECOSLO at 544-1777, or SLO City Natural Resources Dept at 781-7211

- **9/17** SOUTH HILLS
  From South Street in San Luis Obispo, turn onto Exposition Drive and look for the South Hills Open Space sign on the right hand (west) side of Exposition Drive, at Corrida.

- **10/15** CERRO SAN LUIS
  Meet at the Cerro San Luis Natural Reserve trailhead. To access the trailhead, turn right onto Fernandez Road just before the southbound 101 Marsh Street on-ramp.

- **11/19** ISLAY HILL
  Take Broad Street south, turn left on Tank Farm Road. Make a right onto Wavertree Street. Turn left on Spanish Oaks Drive, then right onto Sweetbay Lane. Trailhead is at the end of Sweetbay Lane.

- **12/10** RAILROAD RECREATION TRAIL
  ALL ACCESS WALK/HIKE - baby strollers and wheelchairs, SLO Railroad Station to Orcutt Road and back again. Meet at the SLO Railroad Station at the south end of Santa Rosa Street (Amtrak).

**SLO City Parks & Rec Ranger-Led HIKES**
Events are free and take place **SUNDAYS** at **1PM**. Duration of hikes varies with group. Please bring water and wear sturdy shoes.
For info call SLO City Parks and Rec at 781-7302. Visit: www.slocity.org/parksandrecreation

- **10/16** JOHNSON RANCH
  Take Higuera St until it turns into South Higuera St. Meet at turnout located at the intersection of South Higuera St and Ontario Rd. Trailhead is on the right, just off the freeway.

- **11/13** IRISH HILLS from Madonna
  Take Higuera St south, take a right on Madonna Rd and follow it to the end. Trailhead is at the far side of the roundabout, up walkway.

- **12/11** STENNER SPRINGS
  Take Highway 1 towards Morro Bay. Less than a mile outside SLO, turn right onto Stenner Creek Road. Follow Stenner Creek Road for about 2.5 miles to the end.

**SLO Stewards TRAIL WORK**
Workdays are **SATURDAYS** from **9AM-12PM**. Please wear long pants and sturdy shoes. Water and snacks provided.
For info call City Ranger Desk at 781-7302. Visit: www.slocity.org/parksandrecreation

- **9/17** IRISH HILLS from Madonna
  Take Higuera St south, take a right on Madonna Rd. Follow Madonna to the very end. Trailhead is at the far side of the roundabout, up walkway.

- **10/8** CERRO SAN LUIS
  Meet at the Cerro San Luis Natural Reserve trailhead. To access the trailhead, turn right onto Fernandez Road just before the southbound 101 Marsh Street on-ramp.

- **10/22** STENNER SPRINGS
  Take Highway 1 towards Morro Bay. Less than a mile outside SLO, turn right onto Stenner Creek Road. Follow Stenner Creek Road for about 2.5 miles to the end.

- **11/5** RESERVOIR CANYON
  Take Highway 101 North from San Luis Obispo. About a mile past city limits, turn right on Reservoir Canyon Rd. Trailhead is at the end of Reservoir Canyon Road. Park to the left.

- **11/19** IRISH HILLS from Prefumo Canyon
  Take Los Osos Valley Rd north and turn left on Prefumo Canyon Rd. Follow for 1 mile. Trailhead is on the left after bridge crossing.

- **12/3** BISHOP PEAK at Highland
  To reach the trailhead, take Foothill Blvd. west and turn right at Patricia Drive. Continue on Patricia Drive and make a left on Highland Drive. The trailhead is at the end of Highland Drive.

- **12/17** JOHNSON RANCH
  Take Higuera St until it turns into South Higuera St. Meet at turnout located at the intersection of South Higuera St and Ontario Rd. Trailhead is on the right, just off the freeway.

**IRISH HILLS SPECIAL TRAIL WORKDAYS**
Watch for notices about special trail work day events throughout the Irish Hills Natural Reserve that will take place this fall and winter.
You can sign up at info@ecoslo.org for more information. We look forward to great participation from the public! Please join us.

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**Mountain lions live here**

Mountain lions can grow to 160 pounds and eight feet long. Lions eat mule deer, raccoons, stray cats and dogs, and other small animals. It’s unlikely you’ll have the chance to see a mountain lion because they usually avoid human contact.

If you venture into mountain lion habitat, go in a group or carry a walking stick. Keep children close. If you see a lion, keep your eyes on it and back away slowly. **Do not run**. Raise your arms and yell so the lion knows you are not prey. If a mountain lion attacks, fight back.
After more than a year of design and development, the City of San Luis Obispo and Gaia Graphics are proud to present the San Luis Obispo Open Space Guide.

This attractive, full-color brochure folds out to 18” x 36” and includes detailed information the dozen City-owned open space lands in and around San Luis Obispo.

The brochure gives directions to the trailheads, brief descriptions of trail difficulties and other rules, and an easy-to-read topographic map for each City Open Space.

The Open Space Guide is sure to become every hiker and biker’s companion for easy reference to the City’s beautiful open spaces.

Preserve…Protect…Enjoy!