Planned Solar Energy Facility Would Impact Anza Trail

A planned solar energy project in Imperial County, California would directly impact the Anza Trail. The massive SES Solar Two project would result in the installation of 30,000 solar collectors, each about forty feet high, within the historic route traveled by the Anza expedition. The project site is located in the Yuha Desert, west of the city of El Centro on approximately 6,140 acres of federal land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The scale of the solar project would result in significant changes to the landscape of the area and impact views from the Anza trail. Despite a few modern intrusions such as a wallboard manufacturing plant, Interstate 8, and powerlines, the desert landscape is one of the least disturbed landscapes along the trail, and it provides visitors with a sense of what the Anza Expedition must have experienced when it passed through the area in December 1775. The expedition successfully navigated through this severe environment by dividing into four groups which rationed the limited water available at Yuha Well and San Sebastian Marsh, two springs located a few miles south and north of the project site.

In December, Steve Ross (Outdoor Recreation Planner for the Anza Trail), and Joe Myers of the Anza Trail Coalition of Arizona; participated in a meeting and site visit hosted by the BLM. National Park Service (NPS) staff are working to ensure that the solar project’s impacts to the Anza trail are adequately evaluated, minimized, and mitigated. NPS has also submitted formal comment letters as part of the environmental review process. Possible mitigation could include innovative interpretative resources, improvements to the trail, and contribution to a fund for trail-wide improvements. A key environmental report (EIS) is expected to be available for public review and comment in mid-January 2010. Feel free to contact Steve Ross at steven_ross@nps.gov if you have questions regarding the project. Project-related documents can be found at www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/solartwo
I was in between sessions at the California State Trails Conference in Yosemite this year, when Naomi Torres approached and introduced herself as the new Superintendent for the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail. She is the third Superintendent I have met since becoming involved with this Trail nearly 20 years ago, but possibly the most enthusiastic. With her encouragement and support, The Anza Trail Foundation is moving forward fast. Knowing that the Foundation’s biggest stumbling block to performance was the filing of our “papers” I asked Gregory Gandrud, of Gandrud Financial to help out. Greg has served on the California State Trails Committee with me for several years, and practically lives on the Anza Trail in Carpinteria. When he agreed to prepare our “papers” and join our Board, I knew there was light at the end of this tunnel.

When I rode the Anza Trail from Hermosillo to San Francisco in 1996, I discovered Anza’s Angels…because riding a variety of horses, with an even greater variety of people that distance with NO injury or incident; I knew Anza’s Angels were with us all the way. I believe these same Angels brought us all together to re-ignite this Foundation.

In 2004, before the 20 plus member Anza NHT Advisory Council “sunsetted” the group had voted to create an Anza Trail Foundation and the process was started with incorporation in California. But, an official entity did not materialize. As the years went by, Reba Wells Grandrud of the Anza Trail Coalition of Arizona (ACTA) and I had periodically discussed how to make the Foundation happen. I have known Reba, an Anza Angel, from the National Trails Partnership, the Old Santa Fe Trail, and a longtime Arizona supporter to the Anza Trail. In March 2009, Reba called out of the blue (had to be heaven sent) and said she thought the time was right – a series of phone calls (with Rich Rojas) cleared the way; Naomi and Greg came into the picture, new forms were filled out and filed, other interested people contacted, and we were on our way.

On October 9, 2009 the Anza Trail Foundation was formally established with new Officers and updated Articles of Incorporation. Officers and board members include Jeannie Gillen, Chair & CEO, Reba Wells Grandrud, Vice Chair & Secretary pro-tem, Gregory Gandrud, CFO, Rich Rojas and Patrick Johnston. Ray Murray and Naomi Torres from the National Park Service along with Bill Gibson and Cheryl Blanchard from Arizona’s Bureau of Land Management have been participating regularly. We are always interested in expanding our Board and would invite more participation from Arizona.

At that same meeting, we adopted Articles of Incorporation and By Laws; took care of other administrative tasks and agreed to join the National Trails Partnership. In subsequent conference calls we have approved a Logo and Letterhead, prepared a Potential Anza Projects List, and initiated formal Agreements between the NPS and the Foundation. We are preparing a session proposal to the California State Parks Trails Conference which will occur in Cambria this April.

It is my hope that by way of this Article, some of you that previously served on the Anza Trail Council, those who served as County Chairs during the Anza Trail planning process or those who have recently become interested in the Anza Trail, will contact us. Consider joining our Board of Directors, or perhaps provide in-kind professional support with marketing and promotion, assistance in developing a fundraising package, or consider financially supporting one of our projects – including support to developing exhibits, Anza themed youth programs, and special events that promote and mark the Anza Trail.

Please consider joining the effort and contact us.

Jeannie Gillen, Chair
The Anza Trail Foundation
13133 Franceschi Road
Twin Oaks/Caliente, California 93518
(661) 433-5307
Conferences & Symposia

15th Annual Anza Society World Conference
March 11-14, 2010 Magdalena, Sonora, Mexico

This year’s conference will be held in Magdalena, Mexico at the Hotel El Toro. Please plan for Registration and a Reception on Thursday, March 11. The conference is still in need of papers for Friday, March 12. The subject will be about Anza and the Spanish Colonial Period. Presentations will be held during the week from speakers in the US and Mexico. Join us after the presentations for an evening banquet. Save Saturday, March 13 for tours around the area. There will be transportation from the Phoenix and Tucson airports. A trip to finalize details is being taken by several board members in mid-December and results will be posted on the web site at www.anzasociety.org. Keep checking for information as it will be updated periodically. For more information- or to volunteer as a presenter, call Joe Myers at (520)797-1340.

California Trails and Greenways Conference
April 21-23, 2010 Cambria, California

The California Trails & Greenways Conference provides trail professionals, advocates, volunteers and users with a venue for sharing practical, up-to-date trail management skills; as well as a forum for networking and building support for accessible, inter-connected, quality non-motorized trail systems. For 25 years, this investment of knowledge and commitment by California State Parks and the California Trails Conference Foundation has helped ensure trail stewardship and leadership for generations to come. For more information and registration, visit www.parks.ca.gov

Association of Partners for Public Lands Annual Convention & Trade Show: Engagement- A Call to Action
February 7-10, 2010 San Diego, California

Plan now to join the annual gathering of nonprofit public land partners from across the country for shared learning and networking! For more information and registration, visit www.appl.org

Hike the Hill: Trails Advocacy Week
February 20-25, 2010 Washington, D.C.

Hike the Hill offers you a remarkable opportunity to receive training in advocacy skills and strategies, to meet and deliberate with trails advocates from across the nation, and to educate and urge Congress to protect trails and the hiking experience from coast to coast. Several new training opportunities and events have been added this year. For more information and registration, visit www.americanhiking.org

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Along the Trail

Presidio Teacher’s Night:
Presidio, San Francisco, CA
October 8

Ranger Marcy and volunteer Ancel, spent a lovely evening at the Presidio in San Francisco for an annual event with the Presidio Trust. We were able to educate many teachers about our “secret trail.” It was interesting to realize how many teachers had not heard about the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail and how it ties into the Presidio, San Francisco, California, and state curriculum. It was fun to teach teachers!

Anza Days: Tubac Presidio, AZ
October 17

The Anza Trail Coalition of Arizona (ATCA), under the leadership of President Karol Stubbs, took a major role in organizing Anza days at the Tubac Presidio this year. Highlight of the event, was the horse ride from Tumacácori National Historical Park to the Tubac Presidio on Saturday morning. National Park Service living history volunteer, Don Garate added greatly to the festivities by appearing in full costume as Anza. On Saturday, a series of talks were presented, including professional story teller, Jack Lassiter who told stories about the Apaches including Geronimo and Cochise. Joe Myers (Pinal County Coordinator for ATCA) presented history about Anza and the expedition in reading portions of the letters between Juan Bautista de Anza and the Viceroy in Mexico City.

The letters helped explain the difficulties and successes Anza encountered as he worked his way northward. Further information was shared from the journals about the first few campsites in Arizona. All in all, it was a great way to begin the annual celebration of Anza leaving Tubac with the expedition in October 1775.

Anza Day: Nogales, AZ
October 24

This was the first year for Anza Day in Nogales, Arizona. A historic parade on horseback through town ended at the Friends of 1904 Courthouse. Some of the parade happened on the historic trail, which was dedicated over a year ago. Guests also enjoyed ethnic food, music, and much more.

Anza iPhone application

If you like the Anza illustrations by artist Bill Singleton, you’ll love this application for iPhone. It is a 2010 calendar and clock with illustrations of the 1775 Anza expedition. www.singletonmedia.com

We’re now on Twitter!

Follow us for the latest Anza Trail news online, just sign up for free at Twitter.com and follow us at AnzaTrailNPS.
Along the Trail

Marana Heritage Fall Festival: Marana, AZ October 24

The celebration of Anza going north from Tubac in 1775 continued as part of the Heritage Fall Harvest Festival in Marana, just north of Tucson. It was sponsored by the Marana Heritage Conservancy. Don Kucera, coordinator for Pima County, set up the Anza display booth at the festival. He was supported by members from Santa Cruz and Pinal counties who also presented a play about Anza and the expedition, in full living history clothing provided by the National Park Service (NPS) staff of the Anza Trail. NPS volunteer, Rick Collins supplies the clothing with the assistance of the Tucson Presidio. Next year’s goal is to expand the events offered at Anza Days. The plan is to begin in Nogales the week before Tubac, and then carry the celebration on across the state in the weekends following Marana.

Founders’ Day Anniversary Party:
San Jose, CA November 29

On November 29, Los Fundadores with the assistance of Los Californianos celebrated the founding of El Pueblo de San Jose de Guadalupe, the first pueblo in Alta California. Held at the Headen-Inman House Historic Museum, the event was attended by descendants of the 1776 Anza Expedition who established the pueblo in 1777. The event, which began with a welcome by Californiano Paul Bernal, included remarks from San Jose City Council member Sam Liccardo, a reading of the founder’s names and delicious cake. Los Californios also presented the “Friend of the Californios” award to the Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks (a non-profit organization) and was accepted by Charlie Keifer, a board member for their work in preserving the Castro adobe, located in Santa Cruz county at Rancho San Andres. The Anza Trail joins Los Californianos in thanking the Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks for their passionate support in preserving California history.

La Fiesta de Tumacácori: Tumacácori NHP, AZ December 5-6

Anza Trail staff/living history volunteers and the Anza Trail Coalition of Arizona (ATCA) attended the event. ATCA signed up members and educated visitors about the local trail projects in Arizona. Volunteers Frank Belluardo and Rick Collins dressed in living history attire as Spanish Soldados. We were also on hand to dress children in clothing that would have been worn during Anza’s life. This activity helped teach the children in Spanish about Anza’s expedition and life.
Maricopa Anza Trail Restoration

The Anza Trail Coalition of Arizona (ATCA) hosted the largest Anza Trail work party to date on November 14, 2009 at the Sonoran Desert National Monument (SDNM) near Gila Bend, Arizona. More than 60 volunteers from regional hiking clubs, Friends of the Sonoran Desert Monument, Arizona Wilderness Coalition, including 8 college students, National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management staff were on hand to restore areas near the Anza Trail in the SDNM that have been damaged by wildcats in the past. The event was scheduled to last 4 hours but it was cut short due to a heavy rain storm. Despite the weather, Melinda Mahoney, SDNM ranger said, "With so many volunteers, we restored much more area than we ever expected to at this event."

There were some interpretive displays set up about the typical foods available during the Anza Expedition, information about the ATCA organization and memberships, and the Arizona Wilderness Coalition. It was a good time for socializing and learning more about the Anza Trail. BLM is the administrating agency for the SDNM. The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail (Anza Trail) corridor runs for 16 miles through the SDNM, which is located in the southwest corner of Maricopa County. ATCA and BLM are partnering together, along with the Anza Trail, NPS Rivers, and Trails and Conservation Assistance program (NPS-RTCA) to raise awareness of the Anza Trail with residents and elected officials in the Town of Gila Bend which is west of the SDNM. Several Gila Bend residents attended the restoration event and worked alongside the other volunteers. Cyndi Eisenberger, a local volunteer said, "When is the next work event planned? I want to be a part of this effort so close to my community." The next restoration project on the Anza Trail in SDMN, hosted by ATCA will be February 20, 2010. For more information, visit www.anzatrail.com.

Youth Clean-UP the river!

On November 21 and 22, local high school students from Rio Rico High School’s Interact Club and Green Club were joined by the Nogales Science Club and the Bioregional Activism Class to assist the Friends of the Santa Cruz River in their semi-annual river clean up. The Anza Trail Coalition of Arizona and the Santa Cruz County Public Works Department were there to assist with the heavy hauling.

First ATCA President Passes Away

Rio Rico resident Richard Williams, who helped construct the trail and held the key position as Anza Trail Coalition president for about 13 years, died Nov. 20. He was 69.

Williams was instrumental in establishing and heading the non-profit organization which assures that the Anza Trail remains open and easy to use. The coalition has also served as a way to see that the trail is extended, as additional segments of private land are included.

A memorial is planned for Williams on January 17, at 3 p.m. at the Otero Hall in the Tubac Presidio State Historic Park. For more information, www.anzatrail.com. Article courtesy of the Santa Cruz Valley Sun newspaper.
January
1 Tournament of Roses Parade: Pasadena, CA
   All day
   Our partner, Amigos de Anza- Equestrian Drill Team will ride behind Anza historical riders. The drill team will carry flags that tell the story of the route of the Anza Trail.

17 Richard Williams Memorial: Tubac Presidio State Historic Park, AZ
   For more information, visit www.anzatrail.com

22-24 Los Californianos Quarterly Meeting: Warner Springs, CA
   For more information, visit www.loscalifornianos.net

22-24 Yuma Lettuce Days: Yuma, AZ
   For more information, visit www.anzatrail.com

29-31 Bluegrass Jamboree: Pinal County, AZ
   For more information, visit www.anzatrail.com

February
10-14 Festival of the Arts: Tubac, AZ
   For more information, visit www.anzatrail.com

12-14 River Days: Yuma, AZ
   For more information, visit www.anzatrail.com

20 Maricopa Anza Trail Restoration Project: Maricopa, AZ
   8:30-12:00 PM
   Join the Anza Trail Coalition of Arizona, Friends of the Sonoran Desert National Monument, Sierra Club, Arizona Wilderness Coalition, and the Bureau of Land Management for a day of restoring a portion of the Anza Trail located in the Sonoran Desert National Monument between Gila Bend and Mobile, Arizona. For more information, visit www.anzatrail.com

27 “Take a Hike on the Anza Trail”: Tubac, AZ
   Join the Tubac Rotary club to help end Polio by hiking on the Anza Trail! For more information, visit www.anzatrail.com

March
11-14 15th Annual Society World Conference: Magdalena, Sonora, Mexico
   More information available on page 2 under “Conferences and Symposiums”.

See your announcement here! “Contact us” at www.nps.gov/juba

The Ancestors Speak: Suzanne Pierce Taylor

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View from the Anza Trail

Living History Volunteers Frank Belluardo, Rick Collins, and a group of lovely young ladies dressed in 1770’s attire during the time of Anza and his exploration at La Fiesta de Tumacácori, December 5-6, 2009.