

directions

Journal of the Association of Nature Center Administrators

the Surf's Up Summit!

ANCA Summit XIX at the Environmental Nature Center

Bo Glover
Executive Director
Environmental Nature Center
Newport Beach, CA

a glimpse of the smooth, wet back of a mighty blue whale as it surfaces for air; the backward glance of a wary coyote as it pads its way down the trail in front of you, then out of sight into the scrub; the cackle of an endangered light footed clapper rail as it forages in the cord grass; these are all part of the Orange County experience.

There are countless reasons to visit Southern California in August, but the best one by far is the chance to spend time with peers



The Surf's Up Summit is August 21-24 at the Environmental Nature in Newport Beach is offering not-to-be-missed professional development opportunities.

from throughout the country as they come together for the annual

ANCA Summit. As a member of ANCA for the past 15 years, one of the things that continues to impress me is the quality and professionalism of the leaders in our field, and their willingness to share and help one another.

ANCA Summits are the ultimate way to connect with other Nature Center leaders, and I haven't missed a single one since joining. My staff loves the changes they see in me when I come back from the Summits! I am always refreshed, positive and full

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Founded in 1989, the Association of Nature Center Administrators is a private non-profit organization dedicated to promoting and supporting best leadership and management practices for nature and environmental learning centers.

Serving more than 500 members, ANCA is the leader in the profession.



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photo by Ken Voorhis

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Director's Notes

Regional Meetings

Jen Levy
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Greetings ANCA Members! One of the desired outcomes identified in our strategic planning process is “ANCA members have opportunities to connect regionally to build closer relationships with people in their region.” To that end, we have started to organize regional meetings around the country for management level staff from nature and environmental learning centers. These one-day gatherings provide an opportunity for learning and networking with other professionals and sharing best practices. They include both ANCA members and potential members.

This is not a new model – the Midwest ANCA Regional group has been meeting annually for many years. Most recently, this group met at the Aullwood Audubon Center & Farm on February 4th and there were more than 60 people in attendance from centers in Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, and Kentucky. After a tour of Aullwood’s new Farm Discovery Center, the attendees broke into special interest groups for discussion and networking. In addition to executive directors, this group encourages centers to bring other staff including land managers, financial managers, development staff, education staff, and volunteer coordinators to meet their peers and share their experiences.

The ANCA Rio Grande Val-



ley group has been meeting since 2009 and is designed to connect all nature sites in the Lower Rio Grande Valley in order to form a more cohesive environmental education and interpretation community. According to Marisa Oliva, manager of the Edinburg Scenic Wetlands & World Birding Center, they focus on three areas: manager/supervisory meetings where staff from the 28+ nature related sites are invited to come together and discuss selected topics; staff trainings on topics that tie into the managers meetings, as well as seasonal trainings for interpretive and gift shop staff; and socials for all levels of staff. In addition, this group has set up a Facebook page where they promote activities and news from their centers.

In Florida, center leaders started meeting in 2011. The first meeting was held at the Environmental Learning Center in Vero Beach and followed the Open Space format of shared learning. ANCA members Holly Dill, from the Environmental Learning Center, and Pat Welch, who is retired from Pine Jog Environmental Edu-

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cation Center, organized the statewide effort in response to what they were seeing in their state – travel budgets being slashed and some centers closing or subjected to abbreviated hours. Both Holly and Pat recognize the strength of networking, especially during challenging times, and encouraged other leaders to get together to learn from each other and to support each other. Since this initial meeting, the Florida group has met three more times throughout the state.

ANCA members Jim Berry, retired from Roger Tory Peterson Institute, Patty Weisse, Baltimore Woods Nature Center, Pam Musk, Audubon New York, and Jeffrey Folmer, Albany Pine Bush Preserve, organized the first one-day statewide meeting in New York on February 7th at the Montezuma Audubon Center in Savannah, NY.

Twenty-eight leaders representing 25 centers from throughout the state met for a morning workshop on financial management followed by Open Space meetings in the afternoon. Recognizing that some attendees would travel the day prior, the group planned an informal dinner the night before. In addition, the gathering included an opportunity to go birding and network in a more “natural setting.” Based on the positive participant feedback, the NY leadership team is planning their next meeting.

On June 6th, Annoesjka Steinman from the Blandford Nature Center, Bill Rose from Kalamazoo Nature Center, and Travis Williams from the Outdoor Discovery Center will host the first ever Michigan statewide meeting at the Blandford Nature Center in Grand

Rapids, MI. These three directors have been meeting regularly to share information and build on the great time they share at the annual ANCA Summit and decided to expand their network statewide. The event is free and a picnic lunch will be offered for a fee (or folks can brown bag it). The meeting will include a morning presentation on fundraising with Open Space sessions in the afternoon. For more information, please email annoesjka@blandfordnaturecenter.org.

We hope to replicate these meetings in other regions across North America, and we need the help of our members! If you are interested in organizing a one-day regional ANCA meeting, please contact me at jenlevy@natctr.org.

We are also looking for input on what might define a region – our current regional efforts have included a region within a state (Rio Grande Valley), entire states (FL, NY, and MI), and a multi-state region (Midwest Regional). Considerations will include geographic and travel distances as well as number of potential participants in an area. An additional goal of these regional efforts is to grow the membership and strengthen the ANCA network. Since the first regional meeting in Florida, we have had several new members join ANCA and similar growth is occurring in New York.

With the success we have seen with the current efforts we are establishing best management practices for our regional meetings and are committed to providing assistance in planning, promoting, and conducting the meetings. 🌿



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of great ideas for making things run more smoothly.

Many Summits have literally been life changing for me. That sort of experience wouldn't be possible in a conference center or on a webinar. Those can be helpful, true, but the experience of visiting another nature center makes ANCA Summits the best professional development experience I've ever had.

Our profession is rooted in special places and the people that spend their days sharing those places with others. I have returned from many a Summit with great ideas from simply talking to the host center's staff, or seeing a different way of doing things.

The host site this year is my center, the Environmental Nature Center in Newport Beach, known simply in our community as "The ENC." I've served as the executive director of the ENC for 18 years, and last year we celebrated our 40th anniversary. I'm very proud of my center, and I can't wait to share it with you!

The ENC is like a "sampler platter" of 15 California native plant communities. If you don't have time to visit Joshua Tree, Yosemite, and Redwood National Park when you travel to California, the ENC is the perfect place to experience the flora of all three – with only a few minutes walk between them! Our trails also meander through archetypical Cali-

fornia habitats like coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and more.

Our staff has been busy planning a myriad of professional development workshops and sessions for you to choose from. I've personally never seen such a great collection of topics and presenters.

The Thursday workshops will be offered in four tracks: government, board, planning, and funds development.



photo by Dawe

The Surf's Up Summit offers fabulous opportunities for work and play!

"Challenges and Opportunities of Managing Government Centers" will be off site at the beautiful Peter & Mary Muth Interpretive Center at Upper Newport Bay. Take the shuttle there, or hop one of our beach cruisers for the short three-mile bike ride along the Bay View Trail. Topics for discussion include dealing with declining budgets and staff reductions, and marketing and promotion ideas. Participants will take part in a mini "ANCA Consult" case study.

LaVal Brewer will lead our "Board Track" workshops. Choose to attend the morning session on board communication or the afternoon session on board fundraising – or both. LaVal had a 21-year ca-

reer within YMCA operations and development. LaVal's successful experiences in day-to-day operations give him a unique perspective on the challenges small and medium nonprofits face every day.

Bob Dennerline of BB&T Insurance Services of California is the ENC's insurance guy – and my good friend. Bob has provided risk management and insurance advice for over 30 years. He will explore the most common types of nature center risks, discuss good risk management practices, and discuss when (and when not) to use insurance. You'll also receive insight on specific types of insurance policies appropriate to nature centers.

Long-time ANCA friend Michael Harding, and his cohort Len Issacs from Markel Specialty Property & Casualty will present "Sustaining Your Strength by Surviving the Serious:

A Practical Approach to Disaster Planning." Michael and Len will discuss some of the best practices your peers are using and provide you with the tools and critical thinking skills you need to help you and your center make the best decisions when you are challenged by difficult circumstances.

Stan Yogi and Rick Fenelli will present an all-day workshop on planned giving. Participants will learn about various legacy gift options, the infrastructure that should be in place before launching a planned giving program, ways of encouraging donors to make estate gifts, maintaining relationships

(continued on page 5)

with planned giving donors, and the administration of planned gifts after a supporter passes away.

Stan Yogi has more than 20 years experience in fundraising and grant making. Rick Fenelli has practiced law for the past 37 years. He focuses his practice on estate planning, estate administration, and entity formation.

On Friday you'll have the opportunity to tour our sustainably designed, LEED Platinum certified learning center with the president of the architecture firm that planned it. Other mini-workshops will cover topics like "Managing Leadership Succession" and "Climate Crisis & the Role of Nature Centers" – topics suggested by ANCA members as relevant to YOU.

Facilitated sessions will make up the main content of the Summit and take full advantage of the collective expertise of the membership. Facilitators guide these sessions, but the participants drive the discussion. You can expect to come away with some of the best practices from professionals around the country.

It seems there is great interest in fundraising, so we planned a few facilitated sessions that focus in on a variety of aspects of that popular topic including "Unique Fundraisers," "Major Gift Fundraising," "Ecopreneurialism," and "Planning Gala Fundraisers." Local environmental education icon Jennifer Rigby of the Acorn

Group will be on hand to facilitate a session on "Interpretive Master Planning." Other facilitated session topics include effective partnerships, board development and motivation, and nature play areas.

In addition to plenty of sessions that are sure to be relevant to you and your center, our staff at the Environmental Nature Center are designing opportunities for you to experience the many natural and cultural resources available in Orange County.

We've scheduled fabulous optional activities and entertainment throughout the Summit, in addition to the amazing field trips we've coordinated for Sunday, August 25 (more info on those at encenter.org/anca2013). Each day you'll have the opportunity to greet the morning with sun salutations and stretches with some early morning yoga.

On Thursday, August 22nd, we've schedule an optional morning outing to Upper Newport Bay for some paddle boarding. In the afternoon join us for an excursion to the nearby Corona Del Mar tidepools, join the group bicycle ride to the beach, or participate in the organic chocolate making activity on site.

Thursday evening we invite you to gather around the campfire and sample California wines and locally brewed beer while enjoying a live performance by the Shadybrook Bluegrass Band

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Summit Scholarships

Application Deadline June 1

To apply, download the scholarship application at the bottom of the Summit registration page
www.encenter.org/anca2013/registration/

starring Rick Dunham and Candy Girard. Rick's credits include music videos with Roy Orbison and Shania Twain. His banjo can be heard in the theme song from "South Park." Candy's fiddle can be heard in the theme songs from "Firefly" and video game "World of StarCraft." Her violin can be heard on Jerry Garcia's solo album "Cats Down Under the Stars." More about the performers at en-center.org/anca2013.

On Friday, August 23rd you can take a morning excursion to Crystal Cove State Park for a visit to the tide pools and a cold shake at the famous Shake Shack. In the afternoon stay at the ENC for a visit to the "Craft Bar." Make beautiful upcycled jewelry and magnets to take back to your staff! On Friday afternoon you could choose to visit the Corona Del Mar tidepools, or stay on site to meet Peggy Chase and live raptors from the OC Bird of Prey Center.

On Friday night we will enjoy the always entertaining ANCA Live Auction. You are sure to find unusual items and unique gifts to bid on, including one-of-a-kind artwork, vacation getaways to beautiful places, and outstanding professional development opportunities. This is a chance to outbid your colleagues, pick up an exotic gift, AND support ANCA all in one! Afterwards we'll celebrate our awesome acquisitions around the campfire, where we will enjoy California wines and locally brewed beer.

On Saturday, August 24th you could join us for a morning stroll along the Upper Newport

Bay estuary looking for birds and other critters. In August the black skimmers will be visiting the bay – they're so cool to watch! We'll also be offering you a ride over to the Newport Beach and Balboa Pier to give you the opportunity to just hang out by the beach for some unguided, unplanned wandering. Like a good mystery? Join us for the Mystery Group Bicycle Ride. Where will you bike to? Only the guide knows...

On Saturday evening we invite you to join us for a Patio Party under the stars. After a rejuvenating week of learning, sharing, and exploring, it will be time to party! Gather around the campfire and sample California wines and locally brewed beer while enjoying a performance by the All-Star Trio. Rock out to music from the

50's to the present – you're sure to hear a few of your favorites!

I hope you will join us for the Surfs Up Summit, August 21 – 25. Connect with your peers and learn cutting edge methods from leaders in the nature center profession. Take some time for yourself and refresh your mind, body, and soul. This is a Summit you won't want to miss! 🌿

Bo Glover is Past President of ANCA and Executive Director of the Environmental Nature Center where he has served for 18 years. He and his staff have developed an exciting mix of educational programs that provide quality education through hands-on experience with nature.



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From The Field:

the Basics of Advocacy & how to go about it

Caitlin M. Laughlin
Membership Services Coordinator
Association of Nature Center
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Have you ever wanted to lobby your local representative to support pending legislation, authorize a nearby park, or support the continued funding of a program beloved to your patrons? Have you ever wondered exactly what, or how much, a 501(c)(3) corporation can do in terms of advocacy and lobbying?

The staff of the ANCA office wondered as well, and I attended an Advocacy 101 webinar put on by the North American Association for Environmental Education's (NAAEE) Advocacy Committee this February to learn more. The Advocacy 101 webinar can be found in full on their website www.naaee.net/advocacy, and I have summarized answers to the most frequently asked questions below.

What is Advocacy?
(and what is legal?)

Every page on the NAAEE website states, "Environmental education we need for the world we want." At its roots, this is what advocacy is really all about, knowing what we want and pursuing it through education. Advocacy covers a broad range of activities, but generally is considered a political activity with the goal of swaying public policy through public perception or contact with legislators. Lobbying is when you advocate directly to representatives for spe-

cific action on a specific law. As a form of advocacy, it is legal for a 501(c)(3) corporation to lobby as long as that activity accounts for less than 5% of the total budget. If you believe that you will approach 5% of your budget, it will need to be reported to the IRS. Advocating for a specific candidate or political party is not legal. I strongly recommend obtaining more detailed legal information through The Alliance For Justice (www.afj.org).

What is the Principle?
Advocacy, at its most basic level,



is about building relationships and educating legislators and their staff. This relationship building can include others, such as your local Sierra Club chapter or local businesses. Know your opposition as well, and try to build relationships with them to address any road blocks.

The first step is to identify who the players are: who are your local, state, and federal representatives? At www.senate.gov and

www.house.gov you may enter your organization's zip code to find out on the federal level. Many state websites have similar services. Be aware that redistricting may change your representatives.

The second step is to get to know your representatives and opposition. Pay attention to the news and figure out the players and where they stand. If possible, keep a folder of news clippings on your representative's positions, for future reference. You have the greatest likelihood of making an impact if you focus on those without strongly held views on your topic.

The third step is to know the timing. A bill will go through many people's hands, as it is introduced, goes to committee (where many die), is changed and voted on to get out of committee, goes to the full floor to be voted on, and eventually is signed into law by the head of the

executive branch. Time your contact with your representative to have the most impact, whether at the federal level, or city level. At the federal and state level, it is best to focus on someone on the committee level, and then to focus on the full floor.

How Do I Set Up a Meeting & What Should I Discuss?
If you have a specific issue, you

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may choose to meet with your representative directly. If you do this, be aware of the following:

First, you will need to call often and early. Be specific about the reason for your call. Representatives will usually be home on the weekends, but meeting with a staff person can be just as good.

Second, be sure to use both your time wisely. That means getting to the point of your meeting quickly, and listening to discover the barriers. Know how long you have to talk and verify it at the beginning of the meeting.

Third, advocacy is about educating your representative on an issue, so approach it with that in mind. How does this issue directly impact their constituents? Are there economic incentives to do one thing or the other? Address questions and follow up after the meeting.

Fourth, don't forget to make the ask! Be explicit about how their vote will impact their constituents.

What Difference Does It Really Make?

In 2010, the Congressional Management Foundation found that the best types of communication, in order, were in-person visits from constituents, contact from a constituent who represents other constituents, and individualized postal letters. All of these are very do-able. The first two can be accomplished through a visit to your representative, and the third could be done through a postcard

campaign, where visitors to your center fill out one side of a pre-addressed postcard.

Staffers most recommended advocates communicate the following: information about the impact the bill would have on the district, your reasons for supporting or opposing a bill or issue, and a personal story related to the bill or issue. Inclusion of these three things in communications were found to be the most helpful in persuading members who had not yet made up

their minds on an issue. So, if you hit these three points in meetings and individual mail, you stand the best chance to make a difference. (Not convinced?

The full Perceptions of Citizen Advocacy report can be found on the Congressional Management Foundation's website (www.congressionalmanagement.org)).

Most people believe that advocacy is a waste of time and so do not even attempt it. That allows those who do take the time to make a call, write a letter, or tell a story to wield more influence. Be the organization that takes a few minutes to do something when it matters most.

Any Suggested Advocacy Actions?

Effective advocacy is about teaching those in power about your topic and why they should care. There are many ways to do this: Go to town hall events and ask questions; be a resource to them by providing them with information on events in their area (and even inviting them to speak, if ap-



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appropriate); provide postcards on a specific issue to your visitors; host a round table or panel discussion on your topic and invite them to attend; ask them to write a letter of support for a grant proposal (you will likely need to draft it first); if they have championed an issue for you in the past, write an article for your paper about it and send a copy to their staff; present them with awards publicly (if they have earned it); or join coalitions that have positive relationships with them and work with them on your issue.

Whatever you choose to do, politicians want to know how policies affect their constituents, so be sure to communicate the impacts. They want to hear personal stories because they are easier to connect to and make for good speeches, and they want to hear it from their own constituents.


Final Thoughts

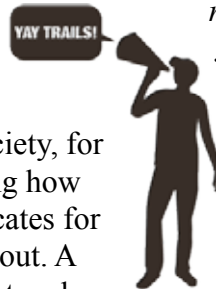
Remember that you are an expert on the topic you are advocating for. Educating representatives can be a lot like educating a group at your center. They have a little less time, and have to be pursued, but the principle is similar.

You can double your efforts by asking a like-minded group to join you. Remember that they need to be like-minded on your topic, so if I am advocating for more outdoors time for children, I might be able to get a fitness group to join my efforts. Thinking creatively when forming coalitions leads to stronger efforts with more people who might not otherwise be involved. By staying up to date and working with others, advocacy can do a lot of good in your community, and for your organization.

If you have questions, we

highly recommend that you seek legal council and that you check out both the NAAEE advocacy resources page at www.naaee.net/advocacy and The Alliance For Justice at www.afj.org.

Thank you to NAAEE's Advocacy Committee, and their colleagues, Connie Mahan and Liz Pomper, from the National Audubon Society, for their help in reinforcing how everyone can be advocates for the issues they care about. A copy of the PowerPoint and audio of their Advocacy 101 webinar can be found at www.naaee.net/advocacy. 



Caitlin M Laughlin has been with ANCA as Membership Services Coordinator since October 2012. She graduated in May 2012 from Utah State University with a B.S. in Conservation Restoration Ecology and a minor in International Relations. She has spent her summers doing bird surveys as part of fieldwork in northern Utah and the northern Great Plains states. Prior to attending USU, she worked for the Utah Conservation Corps and has volunteered at Stokes Nature Center since the age of 12, earning their Volunteer of the Year award in 2004. Her passions include birding, restoration efforts, and participation in the democratic process.

Things to Watch

- No Child Left Inside - High likelihood of being reintroduced and reauthorized in 2013.
- State Environmental Literacy Plans
 - State level: Express support.
 - Federal level: Update legislators and request federal support for states from Federal Task Force of Environmental Education.
- National Environmental Education Act - Supports the EPA Environmental Education Grant Program, Appropriations Committee looking at funding for current & next fiscal year.

How to Address Sequestration

- When budgets are slashed is when it is most important that there is a voice for your cause. Arguments for funding environmental education programs:
 - A little money goes a long way
 - State & Federal actions are entwined
 - Use personal stories of direct impacts
 - How your center fits into STEM
 - Staying Competitive with Green Economy

Important Federal Committees

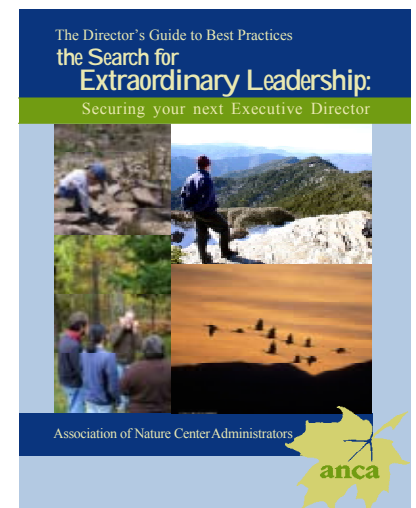
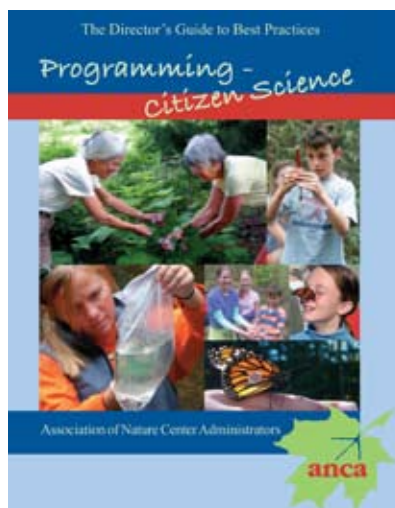
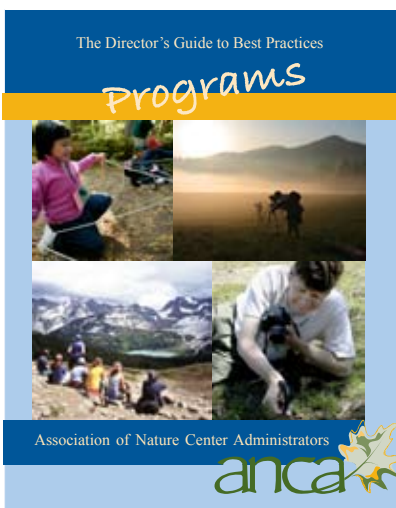
- Senate
 - Appropriations - Decides what gets funded
 - Environment & Public Works
 - National Environmental Education Act
 - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions - No Child Left Inside
- House of Representatives
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Profile:

Counting Carbon: An Ecosystem Services Analysis Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve

Nick Bieser
Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve
Birmingham, AL

Nature centers and preserves undoubtedly improve the quality of life of their patrons and neighbors but this improvement is often difficult to quantify. Positive impacts include aesthetic value, increased environmental awareness, preserving biodiversity, recreation and exercise, and the cleaning of air and water provided by ecological services.

Ecological services are probably not the first thing that comes to mind when asked to describe the value and benefits of nature centers and preserves, but these services are likely to have the biggest impact on the local community. Ecological services are the services provided by the natural functions of an ecosystem and include the cleaning of air and water.

Ecosystems and forest communities can have significant positive impacts on urban and developed areas by moderating weather extremes and their impacts, reducing

heat island effects, reducing air and water pollutants, preventing erosion, reducing stormwater runoff, and providing outdoor recreation space. The services provided by ecosystems not only have positive



photo courtesy of Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve

The services provided by ecosystems not only have positive impacts on human health, they can also help reduce the financial burden put on urban areas.

impacts on human health but they can also help reduce the financial burden put on urban areas due to pollution and stormwater management issues.

In recent years, several computer models have been developed by the U.S. Forest Service and their collaborators to assist cities, land managers, and the general public in assessing the value and environmental benefits of their tree resources (www.itreetools.org). These models provide estimates

not only of the physical benefits of trees, but their economic value as well. Data collection involves sampling tree cover, herbaceous plant cover, and composition on predetermined study plots. The number

and size of plots will vary depending on the study site and sampling effort. In our study we analyzed the ecosystem services provided by Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve's forests located in the Birmingham, AL metropolitan area. The nature preserve encompasses roughly 1,000 acres of

contiguous forest surrounded by a patchwork of neighborhoods and commercial developments. Data were collected from 100 1/20 acre plots (25 total acres) and submitted to the US Forest Service for analyses.

The results for Ruffner were surprising and provided us with a lot of beneficial information. We found Ruffner's forest contributed to improving air quality by stor-

(continued on page 13)

ing 17,600 metric tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) with an additional storage of 1,020 metric tons every year. Picture a football field, and then imagine a round balloon with one end lined up on the goal line and the other on the 10 yard line stretching from sideline to sideline. That is, a balloon with a diameter of 10 yards. If that balloon were filled with CO₂, it would weigh about 1 ton; it would be a 1-ton CO₂ balloon. Now imagine a balloon 17,600 times as large, which is the amount of carbon currently stored in Ruffner's forests. The forest also removes 68 metric tons of air pollutants annually (NO₂, O₃, SO₂, and particulate matter). This saves the region \$848,700 in air pollution related costs each year. This is especially important since the Birmingham, AL metropolitan ranked 21st of 227 U.S. cities with the worst ozone pollution and 8th for year round particulate matter and short term particulate matter spikes (www.stateoftheair.org/2011/city-rankings/most-polluted-cities.html) in 2011. The amount of carbon stored by Ruffner's forests is equivalent to five days' worth of carbon emitted in Birmingham, AL or the annual emissions of 11,600 vehicles, or of 5,830 single family homes. The annual storage rate of carbon is equivalent to 700 vehicle emissions or 300 single family home emissions. The amount of sulfur dioxide removed annually was

equivalent to the emissions of 5,250 vehicles or 90 single family homes. Particulate matter (less than 10 microns (PM₁₀)) removal was equivalent to the annual emissions of 96,600 vehicles or 9,330 single family homes.

Ruffner Mountain's largest contribution is in the reduction of stormwater runoff into storm



photo courtesy of Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve

Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve is a 1,011 acre natural oasis located on one of the last undeveloped stretches of the Red Mountain ridge known as Ruffner Mountain.

sewers and local streams. While Ruffner only makes up about 5.7% of the total area of both the upper Village and upper Shades Creek watersheds it contributes to 34.4% of its forest cover. Our forest helps prevent 95 million gallons of storm runoff from flowing into the Shades Creek watershed and 232 million gallons into the Village Creek watershed annually. These streams are primary feeder streams to two of the most biologically diverse temperate rivers in the world containing unique endemics. The cost for building new infrastructure to handle the increased flow would be \$6.57 million dollars (in 2011). The total value of Ruffner's


ecosystem services was valued at \$7.42 million.

The report also generated valuable data on forest composition, size and age structure of the forest, number of trees, and structural value (timber value) of the forest. The information provided by the ecosystem services analyses and the relative ease of data collection

make this an attractive option for nature centers and preserves. Our results have been used to educate the public, make management decisions, and maybe most importantly, for lobbying and justifying support and funding to donors.

Carbon storage assessments will likely become more valuable in the future with the increasing impacts of climate

change and the potential implementation of carbon taxes or cap and trade policies.

We would like to thank the U.S. Forest Service and the iTree team (www.itreetools.org) for their assistance and in creating a very user friendly software platform. More detailed information on our ecosystem analyses report can be found at www.ruffnermountain.org/conservation/ecosystem-services.html. 

Nick Bieser is a biologist and the former Conservation Land Manager at Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve. He enjoys the outdoors and educating the public on environmental issues.

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