

REDLANDS Community News

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Redlands Conservancy plants 75 trees next to Gateway Ranch

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Live Oak Canyon in Redlands was named that for a reason: It was home to a small grove of California live oaks for centuries. Most of those trees are gone in 2020, cut down over the past 200 years for farming and grazing or killed by drought.

Redlands Conservancy received a grant from SoCalGas in December 2019 to fund the purchase and planting of 100 native trees, including sycamores, willows and elderberry, in addition to the oaks. The decision was made to plant the new forest in the big west pasture at Redlands Gateway Ranch where irrigation would be available, and people would have easy access to see it and work on it.

The conservancy's native plant restoration volunteer coordinator, Kathy Havert, organized the effort by laying out the location for each of the trees, digging the holes, guiding the installation of the irrigation system and training the volunteers to do the actual planting.

Havert and volunteer Abby Harned traveled to Tree of Life Nursery in San Juan Capistrano to pick up the trees.

The long-term plan is to gradually expand the new native tree forest to strategic locations in Herngt 'Aki' Preserve on the north side of Live Oak Canyon Road.

On Saturday, March 14, 35 volunteers from Redlands Conservancy gathered in Gateway Ranch's west pasture and learned from Havert how to plant the trees.

Volunteers kept a workable Safe Space between themselves while they planted 15 15-gallon live oaks, several five-gallon trees and many 1-gallon trees on the slope leading into the west pasture.



Volunteers plant 75 trees, including 15 15-gallon oaks, next to Gateway Ranch.

After two and a half hours, 75 trees had been planted, filling all the holes that had been prepared. Help is still needed to dig holes and plant the remaining 25 trees and do the weed abatement, which will be a constant effort. Once the irrigation system is finished, weeding

by line-trimmer or hand tools will be the only way to keep the weeds from taking over the forest until the trees are established. Throughout the COVID-19 response effort, this activity offers a good outlet for people who can work alone for a couple of hours.

Redlands Conservancy is deeply grateful to all volunteers who provide sweat equity in our projects and programs and to SoCalGas and all of the organizations that provide the funding for our work. To learn more about Redlands Conservancy, visit redlandsconservancy.org.



Kathy Havert, the Redlands Conservancy's volunteer coordinator, describes the process of planting trees on March 14 and Gateway Ranch.

Oak tree planting process

1. Take the plant out of the container (carefully, to not damage the root ball).
2. Place a rodent-proof (we hope) basket around the root ball.
3. Place the plant in the hole.
4. Pour prepared vitamin B mixture into the hole (to help start growth).
5. Fill the hole with dirt, but don't pack it hard; dig a small swale on the up-slope side of the tree to catch run-off water.
6. Fill the swale with mulch.
7. For one-gallon plants, place a plastic cylinder over the plant to discourage varmints from gnawing at the trunk or eating the foliage.

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