



More than three million people visit the San Gabriel Mountains every year to hike, fish, ride horses, camp, ski, snowboard, hunt, picnic, pan for gold, and simply enjoy the remarkable natural beauty of these majestic mountains. The National Forest lands that encompass the range are some of the most heavily visited public lands in the United States. Comprising 70% of Los Angeles County's open space, the San Gabriel Mountains provide 35% of the region's drinking water, while generating clean air for local communities. The mountains also offer critical habitat and biological corridors for Nelson's big horn sheep, California condor, mountain lion, spotted owl, native frogs and fish, and many other endangered, threatened, and sensitive species. San Gabriel Mountains Forever is a coalition of local business owners, residents, faith and community leaders, recreation groups, health and social service organizations, and conservation groups who have come together to protect this magnificent mountain range's wild places. These wild places include:

### **Sheep Mountain Wilderness Additions**

*17,550 acres on the Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests*

The Sheep Mountain Wilderness Additions include several tributary canyons of the San Gabriel River, a portion of the San Gabriel Mountains crest between Mt. Baden Powell and Mt. Hawkins, and the upper slopes of Mt. San Antonio. The additions include a segment of the Pacific Crest Trail and the popular East Fork Trail, described in the definitive guidebook *Trails of the Angeles* as providing "nature in its grandest proportions." This is an "Area of High Ecological Significance," with important habitat for the endangered mountain yellow-legged frog, Nelson's big horn sheep, and California spotted owl. Anglers enjoy the many streams in the area that support resident trout.

### **Cucamonga Wilderness Additions**

*10,714 acres on the Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests*

The Cucamonga Wilderness Additions include the upper portions of the Lytle Creek watershed. The rugged slopes and canyons of this magnificent canyon country support some of Southern California's largest sugar pine trees, Nelson's big horn sheep, and the sensitive lemon lily. The Middle Fork Lytle Creek trail provides access to this relatively little visited portion of the wilderness, described in *Trails of the Angeles* as "one of the few islands of subalpine wilderness left in Southern California." The trail is popular with anglers and others wishing to explore this uniquely-named wilderness.

### **San Gabriel Wilderness Addition**

*2,250 acres on the Angeles National Forest*

The San Gabriel Wilderness Addition encompasses a portion of the West Fork San Gabriel River and its watershed, which is an important source of clean drinking water. The area's north-facing slopes support one of the largest forests of big cone Douglas fir and live oaks in the region. An "Area of High Ecological Significance," the addition provides critical habitat for Nelson's big horn sheep, San Gabriel mountain salamander, Santa Ana speckled dace, and California spotted owl. Outstanding recreational opportunities include hiking, fishing, and horseback riding.

### **Condor Peak Wilderness**

*15,488 acres on the Angeles National Forest*

The endangered California condor has returned to Condor Peak, which looms over the rugged and perennially flowing Trail Canyon Creek. John Robinson's *Trails of the Angeles* describes this "delicate ribbon" as "a lush and verdant oasis in the semi-arid front country of the San Gabriels." The stream is lined with magnificent alders and sycamores and the trail along the creek leads hikers to the 30 foot-high Trail Canyon Falls. East of Condor Peak, the trail-less Fox Creek offers its own secret waterfalls. The entire area is an important contributor of fresh water to Big Tujunga Canyon, which supports several threatened and endangered species.

### **Castaic Wilderness**

55,000 acres on the Angeles National Forest

In the far northwestern corner of the Angeles Forest, the San Andreas Fault thrusts Liebre Mountain and Sawmill Mountain into a long, high ridge. On this ridge grow the southern-most groves of black oaks in California, big cone Douglas fir stands that provide nesting habitat for the California spotted owl, and several rare plants. Castaic and Fish Creeks have carved rugged canyons into the south-facing slope of the ridge and around the dramatic brick-red outcrop of Redrock Mountain. The perennially flowing creeks are home to a significant population of endangered arroyo toad and the sensitive pond turtle. This is an important ecological transition zone between the San Gabriel Mountains to the south, the Tehachapi Mountains to the north, the Mojave Desert to the east, and the Topatopa Mountains to the west. The unmaintained trail system in this remote area offers a true wilderness experience.

### **San Gabriel Wild and Scenic River (West, North, and East Forks)**

*36 miles of river on the Angeles National Forest*

The West, North and East Forks of the San Gabriel River drain the largest watershed in the mountain range and provide thirsty downstream residents with clean drinking water. The West Fork National Scenic Bikeway Trail provides easy access to one of the few catch and release trout streams in the region, while the upper West Fork is traversed by the Gabrieleno National Recreation Trail. The East Fork provides trail access to the Sheep Mountain Wilderness. All three forks are popular destinations for thousands of visitors who picnic, wade, camp, hike, and fish. The forks are also "Areas of High Ecological Significance" because they support rare populations of native fish, including the endangered Santa Ana Sucker.

### **San Antonio Creek Wild & Scenic River**

*4 miles of stream on the Angeles National Forest*

On the slopes of Mount San Antonio, San Antonio Creek flows through a spectacular alpine canyon studded with large big cone Douglas fir. Clear days offer visitors to its upper watershed outstanding views all the way to Catalina Island. The magnificent 75 foot-high San Antonio Falls draws many hikers, as do the access trails to the Sheep Mountain and Cucamonga Wilderness. The creek corridor is also popular destination for families escaping the summer heat as well as for winter sports activities, including cross-country skiing.

### **Middle Fork Lytle Creek Wild & Scenic River**

*6 miles of stream on the San Bernardino National Forest*

The Middle Fork Lytle Creek supports a naturally reproducing rainbow trout population prized by anglers and its canyon is home to regionally significant populations of Nelson's bighorn sheep and yellow warbler. The Middle Fork Trail provides scenic access to the Cucamonga Wilderness and the creek is a popular water play and angling destination for thousands of summer visitors.

### **Little Rock Creek Wild & Scenic River**

*18 miles on the Angeles National Forest*

Rising from the sub-alpine slopes of Mount Williamson, Little Rock Creek tumbles down the northern escarpment of the San Gabriel Mountains into the Mojave Desert. The upper segment of the creek is located in the newly designated Pleasant View Ridge Wilderness and supports an important population of endangered mountain yellow-legged frog, while the lower segment supports one of three known populations of the endangered arroyo toad on the Angeles Forest.

*For more information about these areas and streams, and about San Gabriel Mountains Forever, contact Carolin Atchison at Friends of the River, phone: (661) 607-8033, email: carolin@friendsoftheriver.org, or visit [www.friendsoftheriver.org](http://www.friendsoftheriver.org).*