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Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Announces New Officers

Malibu, CA--The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy announced today the election of its new officers for 2008. Ronald P. Schafer, Superintendent of the Angeles District of California State Parks will serve as Chairperson. Antonio Gonzales, a Public Member Appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly will serve as Vice Chairperson. The Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson are selected by the voting members of the Conservancy for a one-year term. Former Conservancy Chairperson Elizabeth A. Cheadle nominated Mr. Schafer for the post at the Conservancy's monthly meeting last night.

Ronald P. Schafer of Malibu has been the Superintendent of the Angeles District of California State Parks since 2003. In a more than 30 year career with California State Parks, Schafer formerly served as the Superintendent of the Bay Area District of California State Parks, and locally as the Superintendent of the Santa Monica Bay and Chino Hills Districts, and as Chief Ranger for the Los Lobos District.

Antonio Gonzalez of Los Angeles is the President of the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project, the largest non-partisan Latino voter organization in the country. Gonzalez's activism has led him to fight for fair redistricting to ensure greater representation for minority communities, and he previously served a crucial role in the Latino Vote USA and Latino Vote 2000 voter registration drives. A regular commentator on National Public Radio, Gonzalez hosts "Strategy Session," a weekly radio program on Pacifica's KPFK in Los Angeles. He was appointed by Speaker Fabian Nunez to the Conservancy in 2006.

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, established by the Legislature in 1980, is composed of nine voting members and three ex officio members. The nine voting members include: The

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Superintendent of the Santa Monica Mountains Recreation Area, Woody Smeck; a member appointed by the Mayor of the City of Los Angeles, Elva Yañez; one public member appointed by the Governor, James Berkus; one public member appointed by appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules, outgoing Chairperson Elizabeth A. Cheadle; one public member appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly, Vice Chairperson Antonio Gonzales; a member appointed by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, Jerome C. Daniel; a member appointed by the Ventura County Board of Supervisors, Supervisor Linda Parks; the designee of the Secretary of the Resources Agency of California, Bryan Cash; and the Superintendent of the Angeles District of the Department of Parks and Recreation, Chairperson Ronald P. Schafer.

The ex officio members include one member appointed by the California Coastal Commission, Sara Wan; one member appointed by the State Coastal Conservancy, Mary Small; and the Supervisor of the Angeles National Forest, Jody Noiron.

In addition, the Senate Rules Committee appoints three Members of the Senate, Senators Jack Scott, Gloria Romero, and Sheila J. Kuehl; and the Speaker of the Assembly appoints three Members of the Assembly, Assemblymembers Julia Brownley, Michael Feuer, and Kevin De Leon who serve as non-voting Legislative Participants.

A 26 member Advisory Committee consisting of representatives of local jurisdictions, and members appointed by the Governor, the Senate Rules Committee, and the Speaker of the Assembly advise the Conservancy.

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy was established by the State Legislature in 1980. Since that time, it has helped to preserve over 60,000 acres of parkland in both wilderness and urban settings.   Its mission is to strategically buy back, preserve, protect, restore and enhance treasured pieces of Southern California to form an interlinking system of urban, rural and river parks, open space, trails, and wildlife habitats that are easily accessible to the general public.

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