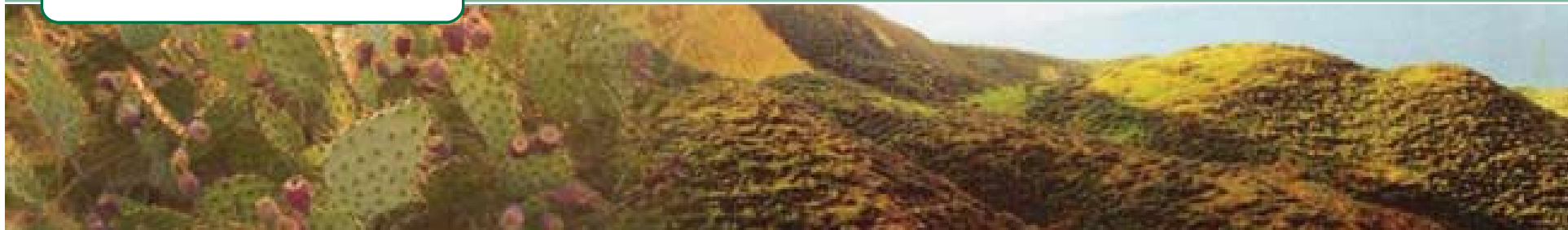




Perspectives

W M P U B L I C S E C T O R S E R V I C E S



Welcome to PERSPECTIVES, an email-newsletter designed to give you a window into what is going on here at El Sobrante Landfill. Topics include waste management issues, community involvement, and environmental protection and legislation. We hope you enjoy it.

EL SOBRANTE LANDFILL

El Sobrante Landfill is a Class 3 regional disposal facility permitted to accept up to 10,000 tons per day, seven days per week. It employs approximately 40 full-time employees. Landfill operations are overseen by the California Integrated Waste Management Board, and the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health.

Letter from Damon De Frates District Manager, El Sobrante Landfill

Dear Friends,

At the end of 2006 we launched this newsletter and are pleased to share with you the latest news and issues affecting our community.

The most important news at El Sobrante has been our recent installation of a state-of-the-art landfill gas flare. This new ultra-low emissions flare will replace an existing system of landfill gas flares and will help decrease emissions caused by the gas produced by the natural decomposition of landfill waste. You might have noticed that we have been ramping up our litter control efforts, both internally at the landfill and in the greater community. In this issue, we also have a little more information about the 52 Coastal California Gnatcatchers who make our wildlife habitat their home. We are constantly monitoring the habitat to ensure the best possible conditions for the gnatcatchers and other endangered species that live there, which is why we have recently turned our attention to coming up with the best way to solve a difficult issue for us—taking a humane approach to removing feral cats that have been living at the landfill.

We continue to watch Corona and Riverside County flourish around us. In January, the Los Angeles Times pointed out that in the last 15 years, the county has seen an 89 percent growth in jobs—outpacing growth in the coastal counties. We're proud to serve the residents of the County as the area continues to develop as a great area to live and work.

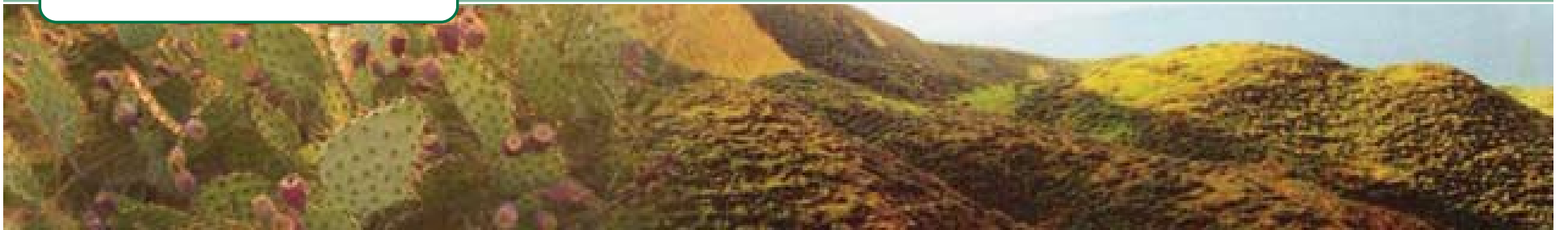
Best wishes,

Damon De Frates
District Manager
El Sobrante Landfill



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Mission: **Keeping Temescal Valley Clean**

We are proud to be part of the Temescal Valley community and our mission is to help keep it clean. If you happen to be driving along Temescal Canyon Road you might see some of our Waste Management team members out picking up litter. Every week, as part of our litter patrol, these employees help clean up the area starting at the I-15 freeway underpass and continuing to Weirick Road. Our litter patrol also cleans the area around Dawson Canyon Road leading to the landfill. In addition, facility managers monitor the entire area and dispatch crews to keep the area clear of litter and abandoned junk. These activities are all part of our efforts to keep our neighborhood as well as our perimeter litter-free.



Significant efforts are also devoted to keeping the area near the landfill clean. The working area or “working face” of the landfill is about the size of a football field and it is enclosed by permanent or portable fences that collect blowing trash, which the litter patrol then clears. There is also an assigned work crew dedicated to making sure that all drivers tarp their trucks prior to leaving the landfill. We report all landfill violations to their employer, and, if needed, we also ban drivers that routinely violate our policies.

Finally, for the past eleven years, we have sponsored Caltrans’ Adopt-A-Highway program. We have been responsible for six miles of the I-15 freeway, starting on the southbound side at Ontario Avenue and ending right before the Temescal Canyon Road exit and starting on the northbound side at Temescal Canyon road and ending right before Cajalco Avenue. We have had issues with the contractor responsible for the clean-up and have recently ended our relationship. However, this is a program we highly value and we are currently working with Caltrans to make alternative arrangements. Within the next couple of weeks, we will have our own crew working the roadside to keep the area clean. We hope that you will see a vast improvement along the freeway once this is implemented and will keep you updated on our progress.

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A Tiny Bird with a Big Footprint at El Sobrante's Permanent Habitat Preserve

You may not know that El Sobrante is right in the middle of a world famous "biodiversity hotspot" that makes up Southern California. Western Riverside County, alone, is host to hundreds of plant and animal species found nowhere else on Earth. Among these important species is the Coastal California Gnatcatcher. In fact, just 52 California Gnatcatchers – at all of 4 ½ inches long – are at the heart of our efforts to preserve hundreds of acres at El Sobrante Landfill. Many thousands of acres of adjacent Gnatcatcher habitat have been preserved under California state law. The small bird is found only in coastal Southern California through Baja California, Mexico, and is known for its mewing kitten-like call. Its preferred habitat has put the species in direct competition with coastal area growth.



The Gnatcatcher became Federally-threatened in 1993 under the Endangered Species Act, which prompted California state lawmakers to move to protect the bird's habitat. Lawmakers put in place the Natural Community Conservation Planning program, which led to the establishment of the Western Riverside County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) – one of the largest Southern California habitat conservation plans. The project area is 1.2 million acres and includes all unincorporated Riverside County land west of the crest of the San Jacinto Mountains to the Orange County line, as well as areas in Lake Elsinore, Perris, Riverside and Corona.

WM created a Habitat Conservation Plan at the El Sobrante Landfill for the benefit of the California Gnatcatcher – and 30 other species. In preparing the Plan area, we worked with the United States Fish & Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Game. El Sobrante currently manages more than 640 acres of protected open space under the Plan that serves as an important neighbor and land bridge for the Western Riverside County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan area. The El Sobrante Landfill received formal certification from the Wildlife Habitat Council for developing a wildlife habitat enhancement program.

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Continued from previous page

Within El Sobrante, the Gnatcatcher ranges throughout over much of the Landfill Plan Area. In all, there are 26 pairs— 15 in the landfill area and 11 in open space known as the Preserve. The population is relatively stable, but they can fluctuate from year to year depending on conditions such as rainfall.

The results of the Natural Community Conservation Planning program and El Sobrante's Habitat Conservation Plan also include umbrella protection for many other important species that use the habitat. One such species at El Sobrante is the Federally-endangered Stephens' Kangaroo Rat. Scientists have shown that the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat demonstrates "keystone" effects: They interact strongly with other species, and their removal from an area results in major changes to the local environment. We provide approximately 400 acres of habitat that support these tawny-colored relatives of pocket mice.

"In conserving the local habitat at El Sobrante, we're actually helping to preserve our quality of life and the very nature that makes our region so special," noted Field Biologist Diana Saucedo-Ortiz. As part of an award-winning team of biologists from RECON Environmental, Diana is responsible for habitat management and reporting that help El Sobrante win ongoing rigorous certification by the Wildlife Habitat Council.

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Program Helps Feral Cats Find a Home

At El Sobrante Landfill, being a good neighbor is one of our highest priorities. But even the best of neighbors have unexpected guests. In our case, it's feral cats. The cats attack the protected wildlife, eat sensitive vegetation and throw off the natural balance within the habitat. To give the cats their own home, our biologists and environmental specialists developed a special program to catch, neuter and relocate the animals to Lancaster Landfill, a sister property in the Antelope Valley that has plenty of wilderness space for the cats to roam.



We use humane traps and the cats that have been caught so far are usually about a year old and have been living out in the wild since being born. Since feral cats breed rapidly, our employees take them to Riverside Animal Shelter the next morning to be spayed and neutered. The animals are then kept overnight to make sure they are healthy before they are driven to Lancaster Landfill (100 miles away) and released.

"A landfill is not a suitable environment for feral cats and we're concerned about them being on our property, but we're making every effort to provide them a home, while ensuring that they will no longer pose a threat to our endangered species," says Nick Godfrey, Environmental Protection Supervisor at El Sobrante.

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New Flare Reduces Emissions

A new state of the art landfill gas flare is now operating at Waste Management's El Sobrante Landfill. The new landfill gas flare will replace an existing system of landfill gas flares that have been in operation since June of 1993.

We are one of the first in California to invest in this new gas flare technology, which will reduce NOX emissions by approximately 60 percent and carbon monoxide emissions by about 70 percent compared to a traditional landfill gas flare system. The \$1.3 million investment, designed by John Zink, Inc., an industry leader in landfill emission control, is currently the best available technology in the market.



The new landfill gas flare is intended to meet El Sobrante Landfill's needs for the next five years. The gas is extracted from the landfill by the use of a vacuum system that extracts landfill gas from approximately 160 vertical wells and horizontal collectors around the landfill and directs it to the flare where it is ignited and thermally destroyed. This process prevents landfill gas from being released into the air.

Not all of our gas is flared off. A substantial portion of it is channeled into our landfill gas-to-energy generators. These transform landfill gas into energy by harnessing and processing the collected gas to power three internal combustion engines. These generate approximately 3.84 megawatts of electricity, which is then fed directly into the local grid where it provides the energy needed to power the equivalent of 6,000 homes a year.

By converting waste gas into energy, El Sobrante Landfill is managing its waste in a more effective and efficient manner. The landfill gas is collected and processed in an environmentally responsible way and provides electricity, which would otherwise come from the use of fossil fuels. It's an all around win-win partnership with the community; Waste Management is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, continuing to lead the way in renewable energy technology and being a good neighbor to its communities.