

## **BACKGROUND**

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San Diego Habitat Conservancy (SDHC) is a nationally accredited land trust working since 2004 to acquire, manage, and protect land that supports sensitive habitats and species. SDHC is one of only a few nonprofit habitat managers working with developers, municipalities, and agencies throughout the San Diego region to strike a critical balance between development and the protection of our valuable habitat.

SDHC was founded in 2000 and granted status from the IRS as a 501(c)(3) non-profit in 2002 under the name Helix Community Conservancy. In 2008, the organization's name was changed from Helix Community Conservancy to San Diego Habitat Conservancy to better reflect the organization's mission and focus on the management of preserved open space lands throughout the San Diego region. In February 2016, SDHC was granted accreditation by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the national land conservation organization the Land Trust Alliance.

SDHC currently manages 27 open space preserves throughout San Diego County and is contracted to manage an additional three open space preserves, for a total of approximately 1790 acres. SDHC is approved by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to hold and manage mitigation lands within Region 5 (South Coast Region) and Region 6 (Inland Deserts Region) pursuant to Government Code Sections 65965-65968.

## **MISSION & VISION**

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SDHC's mission is to conserve and manage sensitive habitats and species while inspiring land stewardship through education and outreach. Our vision is a healthy natural environment that engages the commitment of people and communities, creates a legacy, and improves the quality of life for all living things.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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**Eric Mondero**, President

*Government Relations Advisor, American Red Cross*

Eric Mondero has a combined 20 years of experience in the government relations industry and as a Congressional aide. Currently Eric is a government relations advisor to the American Red Cross where he advises the organization on federal budgetary matters and international affairs issues. Prior work experiences include senior legislative officer at the US Department of Labor, and Government Relations Consultant at Ball Janik LLP. Eric's stint on Capitol Hill includes 8 years for former Congressman Ron Packard serving in various roles and ultimately as his Chief of Staff and Appropriations Aide. Eric earned his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from San Diego State University.

**Kenneth Little**, Treasurer/CFO

*Director/Partner, Brandes Investment Partners*

Ken Little is a limited partner with the global investment advisory firm of Brandes Investment Partners, L.P. where he is responsible for leading the firm's global industrial research team and serving as a

member of one of the firm's investment committees. Prior to joining Brandes, Ken worked as a senior accountant with the public accounting firm of KPMG. He earned his MBA from The Fuqua School of Business at Duke University and his Bachelor of Science in accounting from the University of La Verne. Ken is a certified public accountant and a member of the CFA Society of San Diego. He also serves on the board of directors of Barrio Logan College Institute.

**Trish Jones Mondero, Secretary**

*Senior Director of Policy & Association Services, LRG Public Affairs*

Trish is the senior director of policy & association services at LRG Public Affairs. In 2014, she relocated to southern California from Washington, D.C. She has more than 20 years of professional experience helping organizations develop multi-faceted legislative strategies focused on media strategies, cultivating, building, and strengthening relationships with Congress. This includes the research and design of key messages, media strategies, and legislative testimonies to articulate funding needs and critical concerns. With decades of experience in developing, managing, and implementing legislative programs for non-profits and her expertise with annual authorization and appropriation processes, Trish steers organizations through the complex and ever-changing political environment on Capitol Hill. Early on in her career, Trish served as the deputy press secretary for U.S. Senator Evan Bayh (D-Ind.). Prior to moving to Washington, D.C. from Anderson, Indiana, Trish worked on Senator Bayh's first Senate campaign. While in Indiana, she was a reporter for two local newspapers, where she wrote and developed a political column during the 1996 general election, composed a weekly column that provided information on the local small businesses in the community, and reported on environmental issues affecting local residents. Trish is a graduate of Ball State University, where she received a Bachelor of Science in Political Science and Journalism. For relaxation, she teaches yoga part-time and enjoys running.

**Chelita Borbón**

*Environmental Restoration Project Manager, HELIX Construction Group*

Chelita Borbón graduated from the University of San Diego in 2012 with a degree in Environmental Science. Currently, she is an environmental restoration project manager at HELIX Environmental Planning, working for their Construction Group. Her position takes her all over San Diego County and beyond where she works with local government agencies and the private sector on a variety of habitat restoration projects. She enjoys being involved with her local community. Chelita has mentored students at the Barrio Logan College Institute which aims at increasing college participation. Her favorite community-based project was working as an assistant producer on the documentary "Everything Comes from the Streets." The documentary highlights the low rider community history in Southern California, which debuted on KPBS.

**David Claycomb**

*Chairman of the Board of Directors, HELIX EPI*

Mr. Claycomb was a founder and former president of the Board of Directors of San Diego Habitat Conservancy, where he remains an active Board member. He received a Bachelor of Science in Botany from the University of New Hampshire in 1975 and an Master of Science in Natural Resources Management from Humboldt State University in 1983. Mr. Claycomb founded the San Diego County based environmental consulting firm, HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc. in 1991 and in 2007 he established an environmental sciences scholarship in his name at the University of New Hampshire. In

2008 he retired as CEO of HELIX where he remains on the firm's Board of Directors. Mr. Claycomb is a member of the American Planning Association, Association of Environmental Professionals, and International Association of Impact Assessment and is sanctioned by the American Institute of Certified Planners. He is a general partner in EC Boulevard Partners, LLC; KI Investment Holdings, LLC; and the Tour De Asia Bicycling Touring Company based in Thailand.

### **Joe Duffel**

*Senior Territory Manager 3 S.Cal/Nevada, AT&T Enterprise Business Solutions*

Joe Duffel is an influential business leader in the San Diego community with over 20 years of experience in the communication field. His leadership has earned him numerous awards for revenue creation and retention. Joe brings his expertise in fund raising to San Diego Habitat Conservancy. He has served on several boards in various capacities and is currently the fund raising chairman for the San Diego State Delta Upsilon Alumni Association. In this role he has chaired many successful fund raising events and plans on recreating that success in the same role with SDHC. An avid outdoorsman, Joe understands the importance of habitat preservation and restoration.

### **Christina Schaefer**

*Owner, Schaefer Ecological Solutions*

Christina Schaefer is a landscape ecologist with 30 years of experience in natural resources planning and management, conservation planning and restoration ecology. As the owner of Schaefer Ecological Solutions, she engages in the regional dialogue on the planning and implementation of habitat conservation and resources management, including the development of adaptive management and monitoring programs and management funding analyses. Christina holds a Master of Science in Landscape Ecology from the University of Munich/Freising in Germany, and a Master of Landscape Architecture in Natural Resources Management from the University of Arizona in Tucson. Originally from Germany, Christina came to San Diego in 1992 with a thorough background in international conservation work in Europe, Mexico and the Middle East, where she researched and piloted habitat restoration programs in arid and saline environments. She guest-lectures in a Conservation Economics class at UC San Diego, was a board and founding member for the San Diego Cooperative Charter School, and also assisted with the creation of the Albert Einstein Academy Charter School.

## **STAFF & CONSULTANTS**

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### **Don Scoles, Executive Director**

Don is responsible for open space property acquisition; habitat management; and operations including administration, membership, fundraising, grants, outreach, and education. Don came to SDHC in 2009 with over 20 years of experience in the environmental planning and compliance field where he evaluated projects pursuant to environmental laws and regulations such as the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and resource agency permits. He is a Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control (CPESC) and has extensive experience in restoration and field implementation of environmental commitments during construction. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Geography with an emphasis in Environmental Studies and a minor in Biology from San Diego State University. Don has also completed a Professional Certificate in Hazardous Material Management.

**William Fischbeck, General Counsel**

*Fischbeck & Oberndorfer, A.P.C.*

An attorney in East San Diego County since 1976, Bill's practice is concentrated in real estate, including transactions and dispute analysis as well as land use matters before public agencies throughout the County. Bill has served as General Counsel for San Diego Habitat Conservancy since 2004. He has long experience in handling environmental matters related to real property. Bill has negotiated and developed transactional documents for a variety of situations including commercial leases, lease-options, lending packages, joint ventures, partnerships, and many others. Bill's practice began after service with the Navy and obtaining his Juris Doctor from Western States University (now Thomas Jefferson School of Law). Prior to active duty, he earned his Master in Business Administration from the University of Iowa and worked part-time as a land surveyor during college. He has had the great pleasure of serving on several civic and church boards, most notably including 30 years of service to the Clubs, and now the Foundation, of the East County Boys and Girls Clubs, the Kroc Center Advisory Council, and pro bono council for several non-profit organizations. In 2002 he was named El Cajon Citizen of the Year.

**Jim Rocks, Habitat Manager**

*Rocks Biological Consulting*

Jim Rocks, owner and principal biologist of Rocks Biological Consulting, serves as habitat manager for San Diego Habitat Conservancy. His responsibilities include habitat management, biological surveys, and public outreach and education. Jim began working with SDHC in 2007 and has over 14 years of biological experience in California, primarily in San Diego County. Jim has extensive experience conducting endangered species surveys and holds U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Permits for the California gnatcatcher, Quino checkerspot butterfly, and all California fairy shrimp. Additionally, Jim has expertise in botanical surveys, wildlife, and general biological surveys; wetland delineation; native plant revegetation/restoration; and construction monitoring. Jim holds a Master of Science in Biological Sciences from Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville and has consulted with such clients as the San Diego Natural History Museum, MCAS Miramar, Pacific Gas & Electric, the City of San Diego, FEMA, and the San Bernardino Water Conservation District.

**Kathleen Pollett, Senior Conservation Habitat Manager**

Kathleen Pollett's responsibilities include overseeing existing long-term management of open space preserves, drafting estimates for Long-term Management, Conservation Easements, and Operating Agreements. Preserve management duties include general biological and sensitive species surveys, invasive species removal, and vegetation mapping. She provides operational support, including administration, website maintenance, and ensuring compliance with accreditation standards. Kathleen came to SDHC in 2018 after working in the biological field for more than 20 years, including 10 years with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. She previously was the Program Coordinator for the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and Central Coast Team Lead Biologist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service where she worked predominantly with Ranchers designing voluntary habitat restoration. She has a Master's of Science Degree in Biology and a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Zoology with Botany and Chemistry minors.

**Vince Rivas, Conservation Habitat Manager**

Vince Rivas is responsible for performing field monitoring and maintenance activities pertaining to long-term management, as well as drafting cost estimates and proposals, tracking field activities, and preparing reports. Prior to joining SDHC in June of 2019, Vince served as a project manager at HELIX Environmental Planning for over 3 years, where he oversaw the installation and maintenance of habitat restoration projects, coordinated with clients and field staff, monitored budgets and invoices, prepared cost estimates and proposals, and developed and conducted trainings for restoration field crews. Vince also has experience as a program assistant with the I Love A Clean San Diego nonprofit organization, educating public audiences on environmental issues and sustainable behaviors. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies with an emphasis in Biology from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

**Kathy Tongsgard, Accountant**

Kathy Tongsgard's responsibilities include developing and managing the annual budget, managing the general ledger, tracking endowments, scheduling the release of funds, month-end and annual reporting, and bank reconciliations. Kathy is new to San Diego as of October 2016 and comes to us from beautiful Alaska. Kathy and her family are very involved in horse rescue in San Diego County and she volunteers on a couple of Boards supporting these rescues. Kathy obtained her Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting from the University of Alaska, her MBA from University of Phoenix, and her Juris Doctor from Concord Law School in Los Angeles. Kathy came to SDHC with over 25 years of experience in the accounting and finance field.

**Mary Applon, Bookkeeper**

Mary Applon's responsibilities include assisting with accounts receivable and accounts payable, managing the annual budget, preparing invoices, tracking endowments, scheduling the release of funds, and preparing thank you letters to our donors. Mary enjoys being active in the community and is involved with various organizations around San Diego County to help end hunger and assist our golden aged generation in maintaining a healthy living environment. Mary obtained her Bachelor of Science from California College and the University of Redlands and came to SDHC with over 8 years of experience in the accounting and finance field.

**SUBCONTRACTORS**

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SDHC typically hires subcontractors for field maintenance efforts, including invasive removal, fence construction, and sign installation.

**CLIENT LIST**

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Avangrid Renewables, LLC	California Quartet
Bent West, LLC	Carlsbad Unified School District
Brookfield Southern California Land, LLC	California West Communities
Cadiz, Inc.	City of San Marcos
CalAtlantic Group	Continental Residential, Inc.

D.R. Horton  
Daybreak Community Church  
Energia Sierra Juarez US Transmission, LLC  
Eureka Escondido, LLC  
H.G. Fenton Company  
Hanson Aggregate  
HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc.  
International Industrial Park  
Judd RR Investments  
K. Hovnanian Communities, Inc.  
K.B. Homes  
Kearny PCCP Otay 311, LLC  
Kelly/JRM – Palomar Airport Road I, LLC  
La Costa Parcels, LLC  
Las Brisas, LLC  
Lennar Bridges, LLC  
Lennar Homes of California, LLC  
Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse, Inc.  
Michael Baker International  
Palomar Community College District

Pardee Homes  
Presidio Cornerstone QC, LLC  
Property Development Centers  
Quantum II  
Quarry Creek Investors, LLC  
Rhodes & Grus Investments of California  
Riverpark Mitigation Habitat, LLC  
Ryan Birdseye Planning Group  
Ryan Companies USA  
Saddleview LLC  
San Pasqual Economic Development Agency  
Sunrise Pacific Constructions, Inc.  
Superior Ready Mix  
Sweetwater Vistas, LLC  
Taylor Morrison of California, LLC  
Tule Wind, LLC  
TRC Retail  
Vista Unified School District  
Welk Resort Group  
Zephyr Oceanside, LLC