

Hike #542

WELDON CANYON November 22, 2000, 6 1/2 + MI
Tom Frye (818)341-1403 9:30 A M 1,000 ft. More or less

DIRECTIONS: Exit at Calgrove Ave. from the Northbound 5 in Valencia. Turn left under the Fwy. and go 9/10 mi. Turn in at the very first driveway past The Church of the Nazarene. There is an Andy Gump, and A mini park with tables at the East Canyon Trail Head.

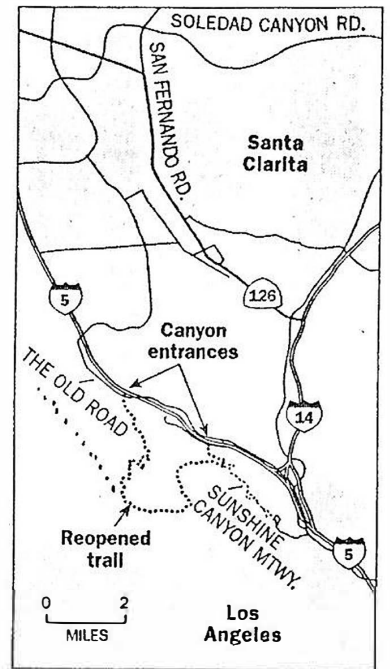
THE HIKE: The trail winds up the West side of east canyon for 2 to 3 mi. When we reach the top of the canyon, and if it is still not posted, we can walk upon to the East shoulder of Oat Mtn.; then come back and rejoin the loop trail. The trail climbs some more as it swings to the East and comes to a wild life viewing station (lunch)? The trail undulates along the ridge and swings back down toward the Hwy. When we get down to where the Hwy. is in sight, we take the road that turns acutely to the left. (If we come to the whether station in the meadow, we have missed the turn.)

When we reach the paved frontage road we tum RIGHT, proceed to the bridge, cross it, tum left and walk on the left side of The Old Road back to the cars. 1 7/10 Mi.

Thanks: Lecho and Jim Nelson

Happy Trails

Tom



Hikers Take 1st Steps on a Long-Closed Trail

■ **Nature:** Landfill owners live up to deal with county by opening Weldon Canyon, which had been off-limits to the public since early last century.

By EDGAR SANDOVAL
TIMES STAFF WRITER

SYLMAR—Don Mullally warned two men and a woman standing in a Denny's parking lot Sunday morning that they were about to enter an area inhabited by mountain lions, snakes and poisonous plants.

But the small group did not seem to mind. Their anticipation of hiking the Weldon Canyon Trail, which has been off-limits to the public since the early 1900s, was stronger than any fear of nature's dangers.

Browning-Ferris Inc., which bought the property in 1978, agreed five years ago to open the five-mile trail to the public in 2000. The company operates the Sunshine Canyon Landfill at the eastern edge of the Santa Susana Mountains. It made the agreement as a condition of expanding the dump onto land in Los Angeles County jurisdiction, said James Aidukas, the company's director of environmental affairs.

In the 1920s, ranchers from Newhall Castaic Junction and points north would take the old Weldon Canyon Motorway along the spine of the Santa Susana Mountains—and across privately owned land—to the west San Fernando Valley and on to the sea.

About 10 years ago, Browning-Ferris planted hundreds of oaks along the trail, which was closed while the trees matured, Aidukas said. Now that they have grown strong—some as high as 20 feet—

the trail was ready to be opened Sunday, and hikers finally were able to admire the canyon's natural beauty, said Mullally, a former biology teacher who became a state park naturalist and nature tour guide.

His group entered the trail on Weldon Canyon Motorway and stopped to admire mountains covered with oak, pine and spruce.