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Greetings from the Earth Discovery Institute and Crestridge Ecological Reserve. EDI and our conservation partners bring people together to learn about and support our local habitat. Celebrate what you have helped us accomplish, be inspired by the contributions of others, and consider your options for involvement in the future.

New Hands at the Reserve

Two new land managers have been added to the team at Crestridge Ecological Reserve: Chris Manzuk and Kyle Smith.

Chris Manzuk, of Jamul, was recently a seasonal biologist for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) working at Hollenbeck Canyon Wildlife Area in East County. With a BS in Biology from UCSD his career had been predominantly in the biotechnology industry. Chris now enjoys working in the open spaces and sunshine of Crestridge.

Originally from North Carolina, he's been in San Diego since 1977. He and his family: wife Lisa, daughter Jessica and son Will, have resided in Jamul for the last 11 yrs.

His position with CDFW became an introduction to the potential of a career in environmental science and an opportunity to collaborate and network with entities such as EDI, USGS, USFWS, River Partners, CBI, and other environmental restoration contractors. When he was offered an opportunity to work for Endangered Habitats Conservancy (EHC), he took a position as Senior Lands Manager.

Chris brings many skills to the job: grading, general **construction**, and experience with management and monitoring programs for various plant and animal surveys such as San Diego thornmint, golden eagles and western pond turtles. Chris has also been a seven year volunteer with Jamul AYSO Soccer serving as a coach and holding

the regional Board of Supervisors positions as Safety Director and Referee Administrator.

Chris's current job at CER, as part of EHC and its 6000 plus acres in San Diego County (and growing!), includes the management and/or hands-on execution of various activities such as habitat restoration and maintenance; plant and animal monitoring; liaisons with conservation partners and refuge neighbors, scientific researchers, and other agencies.



"I thoroughly enjoy when visitors to CER, whether from the Crest community or elsewhere, introduce themselves and ask questions," says Chris. "And more so if the questions come from the young visitors, they are our future!"

Chris considers himself very fortunate to work in this unique habitat, conserving lands and protecting threatened native plants and animal species. "I look forward to a lengthy tenure at CER and continuing to build relationships with the folks of Crest who genuinely value the ecological reserve in the heart of their community."

Chris joins refuge manager Kyle Smith at CER. Kyle grew up in San Diego's East County, at the foot of Cowles Mountain. One of five boys, the 25 year old is an identical twin (so don't get rattled if you see two of him).



Kyle now lives in downtown La Mesa, and makes the daily commute to Crest. He prides himself in being a self-motivated hard worker, who's friendly,

easy going and loves the outdoors--everything from the ocean to the mountains. "I really like Crest," says Kyle. "It's a small community, and so far everyone has been very friendly, sharing a wave, or a hello, or just making small talk with me. I would be thrilled if anyone wanted to introduce themselves to me, and if I can answer some of their questions, I will gladly do so."

Chris and Kyle's daily activities include everything from picking up trash and whacking weeds to repairing fencing, trimming trees and shrubs, making fire breaks, operating a shovel or heavy equipment, maintaining and repairing facilities, and collaborating with EDI and volunteers--they both hold high regard for these folks!

And making sure that the environment and wildlife are healthy and thriving, "So that we can all enjoy the beautiful nature that Crest has to offer."

The Natives are Coming

It's time to support nature and your pocket book by planting water-wise, drought-tolerant and pollinator-friendly native plants! Mark your calendar, the Earth Discovery Institute's annual Native Plant Sale happens the last Saturday of September (24th) at Crestridge Ecological Reserve and October 1 at Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve.



Over 100 species of locally-sourced native plants will be available at great prices, and expert advisers will be on hand to educate you about the varieties and planting process. This is also your chance to visit these reserves and become acquainted with the EDI and their many programs and opportunities. Give pollinators and wildlife a hand by planting natives which conserve water, control erosion and improve the environment. The sale also benefit's Earth Discovery Institute's environmental education and outreach programs.

For more info, visit www.earthdiscovery.com or contact us at info@earthdiscovery.org or [619-654-3793](tel:619-654-3793)