

Catalina Island Conservancy Celebrates The Completion of Trekking Catalina Partners with REI and Brouwerij West To Host Celebration in San Pedro

By Laura Mecoy,
Catalina Island Conservancy



Parson's Landing is a breathtaking spot along the Trans-Catalina Trail and is renowned for its beautiful sunsets and idyllic beach campsites. Photo courtesy of the Catalina Island Conservancy

Catalina Island Conservancy is celebrating the completion of Trekking Catalina, a new master-trails system that includes 27 miles of new and enhanced hiking trails and is the biggest addition to the Catalina trails system since the completion of the Trans-Catalina Trail in 2009.

With the completion of Trekking Catalina, the Conservancy now offers 165 miles of recreational roads and hiking trails for visitors and residents to explore Catalina's more than 42,000 acres of wildlands.

To celebrate this milestone, the Conservancy is partnering with REI, the outdoor outfitter and retailer, and Brouwerij West, a popular craft brewery, for a Trekking Catalina Launch Party on September 14, in San Pedro. The event is free and open to the public. It will feature descriptions of the new trails and tips for hiking Catalina, live music, food trucks, prizes and new Catalina hiking maps. The event begins at 6:30 p.m. at Brouwerij West, 110 East 22nd St., San Pedro, CA 90731.

"With new signs, a greatly improved trails map and waterless restrooms, Trekking Catalina will make the Island a world-class destination for outdoor enthusiasts," said Tony Budrovich, Conservancy president and CEO. "Trekking Catalina gives hikers even more opportunities to explore the Island's wildlands, experience nature and see California as it once was – wild and free."

The new master trails system offers improved access points of entry at Avalon and Two Harbors, changes to the Trans-Catalina Trail

and new restroom facilities along the trails, which will be completed by the end of the year. Trekking Catalina also includes improved trailheads and signage for navigating trails, as well as interpretive enhancements.

The Conservancy extends its gratitude to former Fourth District Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe, current Supervisor Janice Hahn, and the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District for providing the support needed to complete the sustainable and environmentally sound enhancement to the Island's trail system. Trekking Catalina minimized the impact on the land by upgrading and consolidating "social trails," which are unofficial trails created by wildlife and the foot traffic of campers and other users over time. The new trails were built with the help of the Conservation Corps of Long Beach, providing employment for underserved and at-risk youth, and seasonal field crews from the Student Conservation Association.

Hiking maps depicting the new trail system will be available in early September and may be purchased at the Conservancy House in downtown Avalon. Hiking permits are also required so hikers can be located in the event of an emergency. Hiking permits are free and can be obtained online from the Conservancy's website or at the Explore Store, the Wrigley Memorial & Botanic Garden, the Nature Center on Avalon Canyon Road, Airport in the Sky and Two Harbors Visitor Center. To protect the natural habitats, the Conservancy asks hikers to stay on the

designated trails.

The completion of Trekking Catalina is another major milestone in IMAGINE CATALINA, the Conservancy's long-range strategic vision and master plan. Construction is underway on another IMAGINE CATALINA project, The Trailhead Visitor Center, in Avalon. It's scheduled to be completed next year.

About the Conservancy: Formed in 1972, the Catalina Island Conservancy is one of California's oldest land trusts. Its mission is to be a responsible steward of its lands through a balance of conservation, education and recreation. Through its ongoing efforts, the Conservancy protects the magnificent natural and cultural heritage of Santa Catalina Island, stewarding approximately 42,000 acres of land and more than 60 miles of rugged shoreline. It provides an airport and 50 miles of biking and 165 miles of hiking opportunities within its road and trail system. The Conservancy conducts educational outreach through two nature centers, its Wrigley Memorial & Botanic Garden and guided experiences in the Island's rugged interior. Twenty miles from the mainland, the Island is a treasure trove of historical and archaeological sites. It also contains numerous rare and endangered animals and plants. The Island is home to 60 species – and counting – that are found only on Catalina. For additional information, please visit www.catalinaconservancy.org.

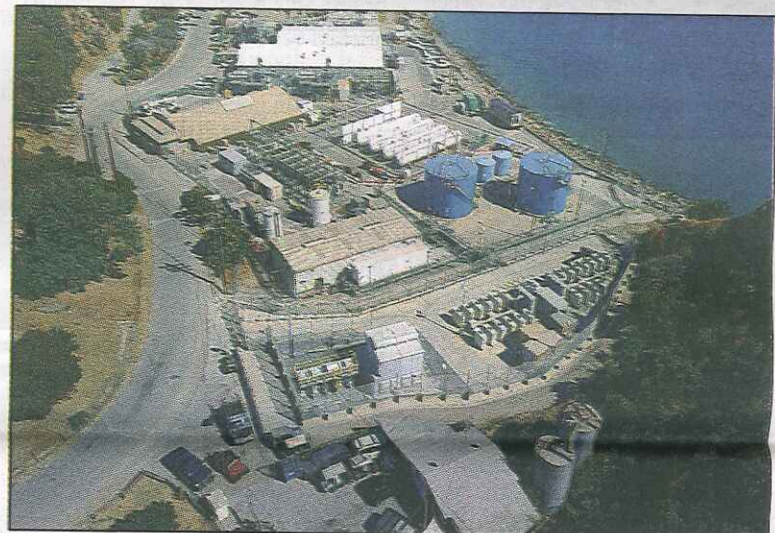
Batteries Help Keep Catalina's Lights On

The workhorse battery energy storage system will soon celebrate five years on the island.

By Jude Schneider,
SCE Senior Manager, Key Initiative



Ron Hite, SCE senior manager of operations in Catalina, stands outside SCE's battery energy storage system.



Catalina's five-year-old battery energy storage system is one of the longest-operating systems of its kind in the country. Photo by Ron Hite

Providing electricity to Catalina Island is both a challenge and an opportunity. A challenge because the island is 22 miles from the nearest connection to the mainland's electrical grid. An opportunity because innovation is keeping the lights on, and that innovation can lead to advancements across the grid.

A case in point is Catalina's battery energy storage system. Put into service on August 26, 2012, it is one of the longest-operating battery energy storage systems of its kind in the country, and it has a significant role in powering Catalina.

"In the energy storage discussion, we are often looking at the suggested potential of the various technologies – what we think energy storage could be capable of," said Phil Herrington, vice president of Generation for Southern California Edison, which provides power to the island. "What is fascinating about this system is it is a workhorse that has been serving Catalina for the equivalent, in energy storage years, of a generation or two, and all the while it has been supporting cleaner and more efficient operations."

Catalina is served exclusively by SCE's one generating facility located near the island's only city, Avalon. It provides all of the energy for the island's 4,000 residents

and 1 million visitors each year. Currently, that energy is generated by six diesel generators and 23 low-emission combustion turbines.

The challenge is that each individual diesel generator must operate at a minimum of 80 percent of capacity for its emissions reduction equipment to function. The 1 megawatt/7.2 megawatt-hour battery system addresses this by storing the excess energy generated overnight when energy demand is lower than 80 percent. During the day, the batteries feed this energy back onto the Catalina power grid.

Using the battery this way reduces emissions on the island while improving the efficiency of the system.

The chemistry of these molten, salt-based batteries provides large energy output over an extended time in a very small footprint, making them ideal for Catalina's small generating facility. Most other systems in SCE's service territory use the more common lithium-ion systems.

"As we move forward, we are looking to add more renewable energy on the island to continue our mission to find clean energy solutions for our customers and the environment," said Ron Hite, SCE senior manager of Operations, who has been responsible for water and power on Catalina for 12 years.