



The Climate Reality Project®

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY, CA CHAPTER

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CLIMATE REALITY SF VALLEY CHAPTER WELCOMES A NEW CHAIR

Sharon Ungersma Assumes Leadership of the San Fernando Valley Chapter of the Global Climate Reality Project

Woodland Hills, CA, August 5, 2024 – Founded in 2018 by outgoing Chair Diana Weynand and a group of nine dedicated climate advocates, the San Fernando Valley Climate Reality Project chapter is now 1,500 strong and growing. In 2023, CA Senator Henry Stern awarded the chapter a “Nonprofit of the Year” award in his district, recognizing their ongoing work in the community to encourage actions that fight climate change and protect the environment. Chapter members engage with state and local government to support environmental measures and advocate for local nature-based solutions; recent efforts include providing significant support for the Sepulveda Basin Restoration project and keeping artificial turf out of new fields in Los Angeles.

This month, the chapter welcomes new Chair Sharon Ungersma. Ungersma joined the chapter in September 2020 as Digital Communications Coordinator; she created the chapter’s website and has managed its social media accounts since then. In April 2021, she completed The Climate Reality Project Leadership Corps training. With a Bachelor’s in Physics from Harvey Mudd College in Claremont and a PhD in Applied Physics from Stanford, Ungersma brings a scientific background to her climate advocacy, while focusing strongly on the importance of community action. As a parent of children ages 10 and 14 living in Woodland Hills since 2010, Ungersma is deeply embedded in the local community.

"SFVCR's goal is to make climate education and advocacy accessible to all residents of the Valley," says Ungersma. "It's not that people don't care about climate change; people care a lot! But they feel powerless, or they don't know what they can do personally that will help or make a difference. Our job is to help our communities understand what's needed and how to take action."



Sharon Ungersma, SFV Climate Reality Chapter Chair



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As part of her journey with SFVCR, Ungersma has developed a passion for native plants and wildlife, and focuses her personal efforts on habitat restoration. After first spotting monarch caterpillars in her yard in the summer of 2020, she went on a deep dive into native plants to support pollinators. She took the Santa Monica Mountains (SAMO) Fund's class on native plant horticulture and began a habitat restoration project on an area of open space owned by Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority (MRCA) in Woodland Hills. She has organized neighbors in the community to plant and water native species, beginning with coast live oaks and expanding to other trees, perennial shrubs, and annual wildflowers. Four years later, the beginnings of an oak woodland habitat are re-emerging thanks to the community's efforts; birds and insects are returning, and each winter season more neighbors join the project to increase the planting effort. She now sits on MRCA's Citizens Oversight Committee and hopes to expand this effort to other sites in the Valley.

Outgoing chair Diana Weynand says, "I'm excited to pass the torch to Sharon, who exemplifies everything we strive to achieve in our chapter's work. She stepped in, rolled up her sleeves and went to work to share her skills, passion, and determination to make a difference. The SFVCR Leadership team welcomes Sharon enthusiastically and looks forward to furthering the chapter's work under her leadership."

"The second half of this decade is going to be such a crucial and exciting time for climate work. We have some huge tasks that we need to accomplish on a short timeline, but momentum is building and now is the time to push hard," says Ungersma. "I'm honored to be leading SFVCR at this critical moment and hope we can expand the amazing organization that Diana built."

Ungersma invites all Valley residents to join the chapter's efforts in whatever way works best for them, whether it's following the chapter on social media to see "Action Alerts" like sending an email or making a phone call to a legislator, attending a monthly online meeting to learn from a guest speaker about a topic relevant to climate change, or participating in an in-person volunteering event. "Joining SFVCR turned the tables on my 'climate despair,'" she says. "Instead of endlessly reading headlines about how bad things were, I started learning about different aspects of the problem and what levers we could press on to shift things in a better direction."

[The Climate Reality Project](#) is an action-focused group of volunteers founded in 2011 by Former Vice President Al Gore. Their mission is to catalyze a global solution to the climate crisis by making urgent action a necessity across every sector of society.

The [San Fernando Valley Chapter](#) of The Climate Reality Project offers special programs via Zoom on the second Tuesday of each month, from 7pm to 8:30pm. Everyone is [welcome](#) to attend, whether or not you live in the SF Valley. You can register for the meeting at: bit.ly/SFVCR. For more information about the chapter, visit their website at: <https://www.sfvclimatereality.org/>

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