

## Rebuilding of The Outdoor School

In 2017 it took the Whittier Fire only 45 minutes to devastate a camp that has been at the heart of the Santa Barbara Community for over 50 years. Located on the San Marcos Pass, the beloved Rancho Alegre has served over 10,000 boys and girls and their families each year. In addition to hosting Scout Camps, church retreats and community gatherings, Rancho Alegre is also the site of The Outdoor School.



**The Outdoor School**, a program of Los Padres Council BSA, is a unique overnight environmental education program serving the Central Coast for 50 years. The restoration of The Outdoor School is one of the driving factors behind the push to rebuild Rancho Alegre. In this unique learning environment, fifth and sixth public school children explore beyond the classroom walls and are immersed in hands-on outdoor environmental and STEM educational activities, hiking and exploring nature, opening doors to self-discovery, science, learning new skills and forging friendships that last a lifetime.

The fire destroyed 215 acres of wooded camp including 47 of the camp's 50 structures. Since then, volunteers have been meeting weekly, determined to rebuild. Debris from the fire has been cleared, underground utilities have been installed, roads have been widened, and 13 buildings are under construction including four large dorms.



The Outdoor School is scheduled to reopen in October 2020.

Rebuilding costs for Phase 1 are estimated at \$17.5 million, with \$12 million secured to date. We are now reaching out to the community to bridge the \$5.5 million gap and ensure local school children will again have this opportunity to experience the outdoors at this unique local camp. Foundations and philanthropic families throughout the two counties have been contacted for support along with the community members. Approximately 4,000 fifth and sixth graders from public schools participated in the past at The Outdoor School annually. In our last fully functioning year of operating, 72 schools from San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties were reported as attending. Of those schools there was an average of 38% for those that qualified for free or reduced lunches. Our council makes a point to focus on underserved communities. These communities can benefit from our unique programs which provide a blend of character development opportunities, life skills, and an appreciation for the outdoors. Without The Outdoor



School, many children would not have a chance to enhance their quality of living or experience their fullest potential from the self-reflection that is built into our programs.



The Outdoor School and its acclaimed programming develop an understanding of how students can look after our environment; develop self-awareness, confidence and self-esteem; develop collaborative-working and communication skills; provide positive health benefits – both physically and mentally – and assist gross and fine-motor development.

The phrase “rise like a phoenix from the ashes” is based on a story that goes back thousands of years. To rise like a phoenix from the ashes means to emerge from a catastrophe stronger, smarter and more powerful. This word picture describes the rise of the Phoenix Capital Campaign Committee, volunteers in both San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties reaching into their communities to create strategies and raise the necessary funds to rebuild Rancho Alegre and The Outdoor School. The staff and volunteers have come together dedicating their time, personal finances, and resources to make our Phoenix Campaign dynamic.



For your personal tour of The Outdoor School, please call Ken at 805-835-9456 or you can give directly to the Phoenix Campaign to rebuild The Outdoor School at <https://www.lpcbsa.org/rancho-alegre-reconstruction/>. We welcome you to join our Phoenix Committee to rebuild The Outdoor School.

Sincerely,

Carlos Cortez  
Scout Executive/CEO  
Los Padres Council, BSA

Glen Goddard  
Camp Director  
Los Padres Council, BSA

