HOW THE ARCHIPELAGO RIDE GOT IT'S NEWEST TRAIL
The following is from SDMBA Liaison to La Costa Preserve, Rich Julien
Check out some pictures of the bridge construction here

Dear Mountain Bikers

Here is my story of Copper Canyon. Copper Canyon gets it name from the German immigrants who discovered some copper deposits between Denk Mtn (La Costa) and Double Water Tanks to the south. The copper was mined extensively during WWI and in the following decades the ore played out was of poor quality and the mines abandoned.

There are still plenty of reminders of the mines right under foot but the shafts had to be filled in after some knotheads fell in and died. “Survival of the Fittest” at work.

So there were some old old legacy trails faintly there that some knowledgeable locals knew about. Trouble was the land was now in the hands of a family that had been up to that time living on the perimeter of the suburbs. But now they were being surrounded by an explosion of growth and all the people that brings.

The stories of their efforts to keep people away and stop trespassing will go down in lore. The property then went through another owner who bought it for purposes of mitigation and today it is managed by the Center for Natural Lands Management. CNLM manages both La Costa (Denk Mtn) and the land going up to Double Water Tanks. Copper Canyon ties it all together.

Hence the new Archipelago route this year will be through Copper Canyon and not down the heinous, dangerous & lame Denning Rd. The Copper Canyon trail will be reached by descending “Whip Tail”, also a new adoption by CNLM.

Copper Canyon Trail crosses Copper Creek three times. Bridges were required to negate the effects of bank erosion and general damage to the stream habitat. With the trail now open to the public certain standards had to be met so I constructed the bridges to standards used by the USFS and similar to the bridge I built for the USFS on the San Juan Trail.

CNLM was going to pay for the bridges but I was so stoked to get Copper Creek open I wanted CNLM to use their money for bigger things like acquiring more open space and protecting what little habitat remains here. Even though it hasn't always been an easy path to coexist within the mission of conservationists I think we can help each other. It is my opinion that people need to be part of the equation of protection of open space, not not be eliminated from the equation. CNLM has made us part of that equation.

Once people relate to the land and form a bond and sense of ownership, the level of interest, compliance and participation to protect grows exponentially. So to support the mission of CNLM and bring people together I decided to sell routered names on the planks of the bridges and donate the money to CNLM.

I petitioned SDMBA for the costs of the three bridges and the Board granted me the money. It was a huge job and I needed a good right-hand man. In fact I found a couple of good men to help me. One was Bryan Furbee, my riding partner, and the other was Dee Folse, of Team Shoebacca. Between us we have routered 80 names of committed people and 20 corporate names from businesses that have always had our backs.

The addition of Copper Canyon now provides a critical corridor that starts at Cadencia Park and leads you to Elfin Forest and onward on the Archipelago Trail. While we have been raising families, riding, surfing and holding down jobs, someone else has been doing the work that we didn't know how to do or didn't want to do. So the plan is to present CNLM with the proceeds from the planks.

-Richard Julien