

**SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES**  
(Action Items Displayed in Italics)  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2023 — 3:00 p.m.

**I. ROLL CALL**

*Chair Fegraus and Members McCary, Orgill, Clark, Litschi, Napuri, and Felder were present. Members Foley, Maloney, Moore, Horne, and Weiss were absent.*

**II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

At this time, members of the public may address the Authority on items of public interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Authority and are not contained in today's agenda.

*No comments were received from the public.*

*Prior to Agenda Item III, Chair Fegraus, as part of welcoming the new members to the Authority, shared the history of the Authority, reviewed the Authority's Bylaws, and summarized the responsibilities of the Authority.*

**III. CONSENT CALENDAR (ITEM A)**

The following item on the consent calendar will be approved by one motion unless an Authority Member requests to pull a specific item.

**A. APPROVE AUTHORITY MINUTES FOR THE NOVEMBER 9, 2022 MEETING.**

*Motion: Chair Fegraus  
2nd: Member Orgill  
Unanimous vote to approve.*

**IV. AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND PARTNERS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES**

**A. LAGUNA CANYON FOUNDATION (LCF) UPDATE**

*Jacky Cordero, LCF Deputy Director, shared the following: an overview of the history of LCF and the 22,000 acres South Coast Wilderness system of parks and preserves; responsibilities include providing education for Title 1 students with a field trip introduction to the preserved lands, docent-led hikes, stewardship activities including fuel modification programs, and organization of more than 100 volunteers; Fuel modification programs in an Urban interface requires thoughtful fuel modification which includes getting rid of non-natives — LCF's robust program is recognized by the State Coastal Conservancy; Trail Maintenance programs with a focus on single track trails; LCF has 30 contracts, manages 50 grants per year; donations of \$700,000 in 2022, staff of 25 with two recently hired field technicians, more than 20 projects over the parkland. December 2022 Trail Training workshop great success. LCF is working on a 5-year Strategic Plan. LCF*

**SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES**  
(Action Items Displayed in Italics)  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2023 — 3:00 p.m.

*Board is comprised of interested community members, environmental, and OC Parks representatives. Its oversight includes the financial health of the nonprofit and that it is carrying out its mission.*

**B. LAGUNA BEACH OPEN SPACE UPDATE**

*Michael Litschi, Laguna Beach Director of Transit Services and Community Services introduced himself.*

*Member Mark Orgill, also a Laguna Beach City Council member, introduced himself: a 38-year resident of Laguna Beach; great appreciation of the preserved areas; and wants to help bring more awareness of the open space to the Laguna Beach residents and help them understand and appreciate the preserved areas.*

**C. NATURAL COMMUNITIES COALITION (NCC) UPDATE**

*Darin Loughrey, NCC Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, shared the following: history of the NCC, the Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP) — 1996 to 2071 established the nature reserves — 37,000 acre Coastal Region and the Eastern Coastal Region. Working with science organizations, the NCC strives to make sure the NCCP goals are met and the recovery of 39 species. Activities ahead include a Cactus Wren assessment from April to June to visit 80 nesting sites, a vegetation survey using an aerial survey of the nature reserve and, an academic program to develop a trail monitoring program to consistently monitor the trail conditions — NCC will form a committee of landowners to develop this program.*

**D. IRVINE OPEN SPACE PRESERVE UPDATE**

*Casey Gnad, City of Irvine Open Space Administrator, shared the following: City of Irvine coordinates with the adjacent open space administrators on all work, land closures, education; finalizing the bird species survey for Bommer Canyon restoration project that will involve removing invasives and restoring burned areas with a project completion date of 2026; Implementing the “Know Before You Go” campaign – trail signage to help with the location of park visitors in case of an emergency situation, this will tie in with a complete response program. Irvine’s open space has been closed because of inclement weather, so far no damage to the land, monitoring the trail system to see if any damage needs to be repaired before opening the trails. 2022 had high usage of the trails, a 200% increase over previous years. Noted that a recently elected council member, Kathleen Tresseder, Ph.D. was appointed as an Authority member and is very interested in preserving open space.*

**SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES**  
(Action Items Displayed in Italics)  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2023 — 3:00 p.m.

*Comment by Member Orgill of “destructive tourism” and a reference to an article in Westways magazine about the degradation of trails by overuse. Gnadt noted that Irvine is looking at trail use and that some trails are only open once a month. When “social” trails are created it is difficult to manage them — photographers can be a problem because they want photographs off trail. Discussion of how to collect fines.*

**E. NEWPORT BEACH OPEN SPACE UPDATE**

*Representative not available to provide an update at this time.*

**F. ALISO VIEJO OPEN SPACE UPDATE**

*Representative not available to provide an update at this time.*

**G. LAGUNA NIGUEL OPEN SPACE UPDATE**

*Representative not available to provide an update at this time.*

**RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):**

Receive and File Agenda Items IV.A–G.

*Motion: Member McCary*

*2<sup>nd</sup>: Member Clark*

*Unanimous vote to Receive and File Agenda Items IV.A–G.*

**V. OC PARKS STAFF UPDATE**

**A. PARK OPERATIONS — ALL DEPARTMENTS UPDATE**

*John Gannaway, OC Parks Parks Division Manager, shared the following: Introduction of Richard Fink, Interim Deputy Director and that Pam Passow is the Interim Acting Director. Noting a series of promotions and recruitments – Gannaway introduced Nick Martinico, OC Parks Supervising Park Ranger II at Irvine Ranch Open Space and Travis Martz, OC Parks Supervising Park Ranger II at Laguna Niguel Regional Park.*

**B. LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK (LCWP) AND ALISO AND WOOD CANYONS WILDERNESS PARK (AWCWP) SPOTLIGHT**

1. LCWP Update

*Brad Barker, OC Parks Interim Supervising Park Ranger II, shared the following: five and half inches of rain since December 28, 2022 with last week’s rain at more than three inches; LCWP has been closed, in conjunction with the closing of neighboring parks; no damage apparent so*

# SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES

(Action Items Displayed in Italics)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2023 — 3:00 p.m.

*far; the project of re-establishing the Pacific Pocket Mouse, the smallest rodent in the USA, adjacent to the Water Tank Trail during the first few years was not productive, but in 2022, 70 new babies were born, new mice will be added in the Spring to help with the genetic pool; invasives — volunteers are removing Sahara Mustard in specific areas led by volunteer Jo Miller who also helps with the invasive removal program at AWCWP; Laura Cohen, OC Parks Resource Specialist, is working with volunteers from Stanbridge University to help remove Tarragon which is a native but is a very aggressive grower and create a Pollinator Garden. Cohen also developed an informative sign for the closed gates during the rain period to help visitors find other areas that are suitable for use during the rainy period. Great education tool.*

## 2. AWCWP Update

*Bryan Valladares, OC Parks Interim Supervising Park Ranger I, shared the following: AWCWP closed since late December — total rain over five inches, with more than four and a half inches in January; trail stewardship with LCF on single track trail restoration; completed Watershed Trail, funded by a state grant, interpretive exhibits, a bioswale, fire garden, fossil display 1,110 foot interpretive trail by Aliso Creek and around the Visitor Center; Rick Schaffer, OC Parks Resource Specialist, is finalizing work on interpretive signage; there is growth in the Coastal Fire area and restoration will start when the rain ceases.*

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):**

Receive and File Agenda Items V.A–B.

*Motion: Member Napuri*

*2<sup>nd</sup>: Member Orgill*

*Unanimous vote to Receive and File Agenda Items V.A–B.*

## **VI. DISCUSSION CALENDAR (ITEMS A–E)**

### **A. TRAIL USE DESIGNATIONS PILOT PROJECT IN LCWP AND AWCWP UPDATE**

Staff will provide an update on the Trail Use Designations Pilot Project occurring within LCWP and AWCWP.

*Mike Wilson, OC Parks Business Manager, shared the following: OC Parks contracted in 2021 with the Utah State University to conduct a study funded by the NCC to evaluate trails in certain wilderness parks as to changes, conflicts, and other trail usage data; new trail usage guidelines were introduced for the survey; in December 2021 the project trails reverted to*

**SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES**  
(Action Items Displayed in Italics)  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2023 — 3:00 p.m.

*their original usage; the initial study was presented to the OC Parks Trails Subcommittee, Coastal Greenbelt Authority, and other entities with an analysis and summary of the findings. Three take-aways from the study indicated that conflict was low, visitors were supportive of trail usage management and that the project signage was helpful. On December 12, 2022 the OC Parks Trails Subcommittee discussed the study, reviewed feedback, recommended actions included using data for future trail management. Next step, Utah State University will deliver an environmental and ecological report which will include data from the drone observations of the impact on the trails — pre and post study drone surveys. This will also help with future trail management.*

**RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):**

Receive and File.

*Motion: Chair Fegraus*

*2<sup>nd</sup>: Member Napuri*

*Unanimous vote to Receive and File the report.*

**B. HABITAT SUSTAINABILITY AND LCWP TRAIL MAP REVIEW**

Staff will provide an overview on the Ridgetop Trail and its impact on LCWP.

*Barbara Norton, OC Parks Operations Manager, shared the following: the projected LCWP trail map was used to illustrate the Woods End Trail, Ridge Top Trail, Gravel, Edison Trails, and trails in the Dilley section of the park. The complex ownership includes Cities of Laguna Woods and Laguna Beach, Southern California Edison, and Laguna Beach County Water District. The trails are managed under a cooperative agreement with the County of Orange and under the NCCP guidelines. The General Development Plan does not include many of these trails.*

**RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):**

1. Receive and File; or
2. If appropriate, approve a letter to OC Parks regarding the current LCWP trail map and the trail map in the LCWP General Development Plan.

*Motion: Chair Fegraus*

*2<sup>nd</sup>: Member Napuri*

*Unanimous vote to Receive and File the report.*

**SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES**  
(Action Items Displayed in Italics)  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2023 — 3:00 p.m.

**C. IRVINE WILDLIFE CORRIDOR UPDATE**

Receive information about the Science Advisors series, Partner Charter, and other activities.

*Member Clark shared the following: a recent tour of the completed section of the wildlife corridor within the FivePoint development was impressive with wildlife already using it and working on state grants for research and future projects to solve the challenging connecting sections. Encouraged us to look at the following websites — [wildlifecorridor.org](http://wildlifecorridor.org) and [lagunagreenbelt.org](http://lagunagreenbelt.org)*

**RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):**

Receive and File.

*Motion: Member Napuri*

*2<sup>nd</sup>: Member Orgill*

*Unanimous vote to Receive and File the report.*

**D. LAGUNA CANYON ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE**

City of Laguna Beach Staff will share an update on its Laguna Canyon Road Improvement Project following a report presented at the November 15, 2022 City Council Meeting.

*Michael Litschi, City of Laguna Beach Director of Transit and Community Services, shared the following: the Laguna Canyon Road project is in coordination with Caltrans; the Laguna Beach City Council received a report at their November 2022 meeting stating that the first phase of the project, the Project Study Report, was completed and includes five project alternatives; possible funding opportunities; and working with Southern California Edison, management of the highway. Next step for the city is to prepare a Project Approval Document, which will take a minimum 24 months and will include public involvement. The city's website has more information and a video of the November 2022 meeting. Future questions possible for Authority include alternative lane, using open space for undergrounding/pull-outs. Question of timing for public comments — preliminary plans possibly in Spring 2023.*

**RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):**

Receive and File.

*Motion: Chair Fegraus*

*2<sup>nd</sup>: Member Maloney*

*Unanimous vote to Receive and File.*

**SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES**  
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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2023 — 3:00 p.m.

**E. COASTAL GREENBELT AUTHORITY PROPOSED 2023 MEETING SCHEDULE**

The Authority's 2023 meeting schedule is provided for review and approval.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Approve the Coastal Greenbelt Authority's 2023 meeting schedule.

*Motion: Member Napuri*

*2<sup>nd</sup>: Member McCary*

*Unanimous approval to Approve the 2023 Coastal Greenbelt Authority Meeting Schedule.*

**F. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

The bylaws of the Authority require that the Authority elect a Chair and Vice-Chair annually during the January meeting to serve for a term of one year.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Nominate and select Authority Members to serve in the following positions for one year:

1. Coastal Greenbelt Authority Chair.
2. Coastal Greenbelt Authority Vice-Chair.

*Nominee: Chair – Chair Fegraus*

*Motion: Member McCary*

*2<sup>nd</sup>: Member Clark*

*Unanimous vote to select Chair Fegraus as Chair.*

*Nominee: Vice-Chair – Member McCary*

*Motion: Member Clark*

*2<sup>nd</sup>: Member Napuri*

*Unanimous vote to select Member McCary as Vice-Chair.*

**VII. AUTHORITY COMMENTS AND REPORT**

At this time Authority Members may comment on agenda or non-agenda matters, provided that no action may be taken on off-agenda items unless authorized by law. Members may also suggest items for the March 8, 2023 meeting agenda.

*Member Napuri, Deputy Chief of Staff for the Fifth District Orange County Supervisor Katrina Foley, noted she is familiar with the wilderness parks and uses*

**SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES**  
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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2023 — 3:00 p.m.

*the trails and she encouraged members to submit items for the Supervisor's weekly email newsletters.*

*Discussion by Members: Request an update on Caltrans activities near the El Toro Road and Laguna Canyon Road intersection.*

*Members reviewed possible agenda items for the next meeting: continue to receive updates, if available, on the Trail Use Designations Pilot Project; review of new trails; Irvine Wildlife Corridor; Laguna Canyon Road Improvement Project; updates regarding parcels bought with Proposition 12 funding (lease agreements with County of Orange and City of Laguna Beach, and the City of Laguna Beach and progress with the correct parcel zoning); and to hear again the City of Irvine's Open Space Plan.*

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT TO MARCH 8, 2023**

*Motion: Vice-Chair McCary*

*2nd: Member Orgill*

*Unanimous vote to adjourn.*