

SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES
(Action Items Displayed in Italics)
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2024 — 3:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Fegraus, Vice Chair McCary, and Members Clark, Horne, Weiss, and Felder were present. Members Orgill, Foley, Maloney, Conners, Litschi, and Osborne 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.

Authority Member Felder, acting as a member of the public, inquired about the erosion damage near the Carolyn Wood Knoll. What is the Laguna Beach County Water District going to do to restore the area? Also, Mr. Felder noted the grading by Southern California Edison near Aliso & Wood Canyons Wilderness Park and the City of Laguna Beach open space. City of Laguna Beach will follow up with Southern California Edison.

Jinger Wallace, expressed concern about RoundUp being used in neighboring open space. She also shared that use of RoundUp should be eliminated for all Laguna Beach and OC Parks open space.

The following public comment was received following Agenda Item IV.G.

Chair Fegraus invited Erin Andreatta, Program Manager, Advocacy and Engagement Programs, Crystal Cove Conservancy (CCC), to share information about their activities. CCC was founded in 1999 to preserve the historic cottages, to help with education and conservation at Crystal Cove State Park. The final funding has been obtained to complete the restoration of the cottages. STEM – Title 1 school trips, collaboration with UCI on research projects. Recently hired an Education Director.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR (ITEM(S) 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 8, 2023 MEETING.

*Motion: Vice Chair McCary
2nd: Chair Fegraus
Unanimous vote to approve*

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IV. AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND PARTNERS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

A. LAGUNA CANYON FOUNDATION (LCF) UPDATE

Karin Vardaman, recently appointed LCF Executive Director, shared some of her background. Laguna Beach native, always a passion for the open spaces surrounding Laguna Beach. Professionally: Acting Director for Animal Care and Operations at the Pacific Marine Mammal Center, Senior Director at the Ocean Institute and Founder/Executive Director at Working Circle, a nationally recognized non-profit dedicated to wild wolf conservation. LCF remains committed to restoration projects, evaluating opportunities for new projects, and partnering with OC Parks at the two wilderness parks.

B. LAGUNA BEACH OPEN SPACE UPDATE

Representative not available to provide an update at this time.

C. NATURAL COMMUNITIES COALITION (NCC) UPDATE

Darin Loughery, NCC Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, shared the following: Polling Study of local residents on their views of the wilderness parks and habitat studies; great support for studies, few aware of NCC or Nature Reserve of OC and the challenges presented; a disconnect between abusive use and protecting the habitat; conducted series of focus meetings with OC Parks, public agencies, and LCF; developing strategy opportunities from the interviews for future reports.

D. IRVINE OPEN SPACE PRESERVE UPDATE

Irvine Councilmember Kathleen Treseder, PhD, was reappointed as City of Irvine Alternate CGA Member.

A written update from Casey Gnad, City of Irvine Open Space Administrator, who was unable to attend the meeting was read into the record:

1. Gate Way Preserve - The All American Asphalt plant has ceased operation as of 11/15/23. We're in the process of updating the COI North Recreation Resource Management Plan for this new land. Once completed, we will present it to the Wildlife agencies for review and approval.

2. Bommer Canyon Restoration - The 49-acre restoration site was mowed twice this past season, delineation fencing was installed, and we're

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finalizing the irrigation plan for the planting that will occur this year. Additional mowing and seeding will also occur in the next two seasons.

3. *Open Space Closures – We have had to close the open space several times the past few months due to our ¼” of precipitation threshold being hit. Our closures followed similar timeframes as OC Parks and Crystal Cove State Park.*

4. *E-bikes – In Q1 of this year, Irvine PD will start enforcing the updated Municipal Code Sec. 3-4-138. – Vehicles. Unless specifically authorized, no person shall drive or propel any automobile, truck, dune buggy, electric bike, motorcycle, motor scooter, ATV or any other motor-powered vehicle within the open space area. New trail entry signs have been installed to reflect the latest Municipal Code update.*

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

Jeff Kirby, City of Laguna Niguel Recreation Supervisor, noted that this Spring the city will circulate to their residents the new Check-List to accompany the City of Laguna Niguel Trail Map.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and File Agenda Items IV.A–G.

Motion: Vice Chair McCary

2nd: Member Weiss

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

V. OC PARKS STAFF UPDATE

A. PARK OPERATIONS — ALL DEPARTMENTS UPDATE

Ev Mena, Interim OC Parks Parks Division Manager, shared new OC Parks positions, 9 will graduate from park ranger training on January 25th, new recruitment started for the next Park Ranger Training, recruitment for Trails Administrator for all OC Parks.

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

1. LCWP Update

Brad Barker, OC Parks Supervising Park Ranger II, shared the following: New Resource Specialist, Shelbi Richardson; with the San Diego Zoo looking at a new site for introducing the Pacific Pocket Mouse – near Barbara’s Lake in the Parcel 5 area; the park has been closed for about 10 days due to rain and resulting conditions.

2. AWCWP Update

Travis Martz, OC Parks Supervising Park Ranger II, shared the following: new office technician position has been filled – the Office Tech responsibilities include sale of annual passes, administration, and staffs the Nature Center; working with Laguna Canyon Foundation on the Cholla Trail restoration project; new camera study by OC Parks and volunteers for illegal entry to AWCWP by e-bikers in the Top of the World area near Nestall Road; closed for rain but no significant damage.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and File Agenda Items V.A–B.

Motion: Member Weiss

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

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

VI. DISCUSSION CALENDAR (ITEM(S) A–G)

A. LAGUNA CANYON ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE

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

Member Weiss, City of Laguna Beach Councilmember, stated the Authority will receive a report when there is any new information.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

1. Receive and File

2. If a report is provided, if appropriate, authorize an Authority Member to prepare a comment letter to the City of Laguna Beach regarding

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the Laguna Canyon Road Improvement Project and Continue the Item.

Motion to Receive and File and Continue the Agenda Item

Motion: Vice Chair McCary

2nd: Member Weiss

Unanimous vote to Receive and File and Continue the Item

B. LAGUNA CANYON ROAD WIDENING AND SAFETY PROJECT UPDATE

OC Parks or Caltrans Staff will share an update on Caltrans' Laguna Canyon Road Widening and Safety Project.

Brian Kurnow, OC Parks Entitlement Division Manager, shared the following: OC Parks continues to attend the weekly calls with CALTRANS; OC Parks issued a permit for fencing that will replace the old fencing along that section of Laguna Canyon Road. Member Felder asked about the fencing along the driveway from El Toro Road into the Anneliese school that will block the wildlife corridor. Also, a question about who will maintain the area between the driveway and Laguna Canyon Road. Noted CALTRANS has that responsibility.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and File and Continue the Item.

Motion: Member Weiss

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

Unanimous vote to Receive and File and Continue the Item

C. IRVINE WILDLIFE CORRIDOR UPDATE

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

Chair Fegraus and Member Clark provided an update on tentative activities for 2024 for the Irvine-Laguna Wildlife Corridor.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and File.

Motion: Vice Chair McCary

2nd: Member Weiss

Unanimous vote to Receive and File and Continue the Item

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D. HABITAT SUSTAINABILITY AND LCWP TRAIL MAP REVIEW

Authority Members will refer to and discuss sections of LCWP General Development and Resource Management Plans that require updates or amendments and discuss preparation of an addendum to these plans.

OC Parks Staff outlined the tour of new trails in the Ridge Park section of LCWP.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

1. Continue item, review plans for next tour of new trails, add to list for consideration in the LCWP General Development Plan and Resource Management Plan Addendum.

Motion: Member Weis

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

Unanimous to have a tour of new trails on March 13, 2024.

2. Approve a letter requesting that OC Parks prepare a future budget allocation to implement an Addendum to the LCWP General Development Plan and Resource Management Plan.

Members reviewed the draft Budget Request letter.

Motion: Vice Chair McCary

2nd: Member Felder

Unanimous to approve and send the Budget Request letter to OC Parks for distribution.

E. CITY OF LAGUNA BEACH NATURE RESERVE PROGRAM ENROLLMENT UPDATE

City of Laguna Beach Staff, if available, will share an update on the enrollment of open space into the Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP).

Chair Fegraus shared the draft letter with the Members and comments from the City of Laguna Beach Staff. Edits to the letter included adding AWCWP in the second paragraph, last sentence and in the final paragraph change to “We encourage the City of Laguna Beach to proceed...”.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Authorize an Authority Member to prepare a letter to the City of Laguna Beach supporting their enrollment in the NCCP/HCP program, including the City of Laguna Beach’s open space land within LCWP.

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Motion: Member Felder

2nd: Chair Fegraus

Unanimous to complete and send the letter to the City of Laguna Beach.

F. COASTAL GREENBELT AUTHORITY PROPOSED 2024 MEETING SCHEDULE

The Authority's 2024 meeting schedule is provided for review and approval.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Approve the Coastal Greenbelt Authority's 2024 meeting schedule.

Motion: Vice Chair McCary

2nd: Member Weiss

Unanimous to approve the 2024 Coastal Greenbelt Authority meeting schedule.

G. 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(S):

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.

Nomination of Mary Fegraus and Annie McCary to serve as Authority Chair and Vice Chair, respectively.

Motion: Member Felder

2nd: Member Weiss

Unanimous to approve the 2024 Coastal Greenbelt Authority meeting schedule.

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 July 12, 2023 meeting agenda.

Member Felder asked that the OC Fire Authority make an e-bike presentation to the Authority similar to the one they made for the City of Irvine.

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VIII. ADJOURNMENT TO MARCH 13, 2024 FIELD TRIP, WEATHER PERMITTING

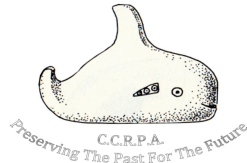
Motion: Member Clark

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

Unanimous vote to adjourn to the March 13, 2024 Field Trip, weather permitting.



CALIFORNIA
NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



Pantone Process Black
Pantone 147-8c



**BANNING RANCH
CONSERVANCY**

Partner Charter

Support for a Functional, Sustainable Irvine-Laguna Wildlife Corridor

Purpose of the Charter: This Partner Charter provides a voluntary avenue for partner organizations and government entities to signify collaboration in implementing the Irvine-Laguna Wildlife Corridor (Wildlife Corridor).

The Project: The coastal portion of the south Orange County Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) encompasses 22,000 acres of protected wilderness habitat offering multiple benefits to wildlife and people. This portion of the NCCP/HCP is a gateway into more than 450,000 acres of wilderness habitat in the Cleveland National Forest that is a regionally important ecosystem. These two areas are separated by decades of ongoing urbanization which has caused fragmentation of the landscape making it difficult for many animals to move between the coastal and inland reserves.

Upon successful completion, the Wildlife Corridor will facilitate wildlife movement between the coastal parks and preserves and the Cleveland National Forest. Wildlife corridors in general, and this Corridor in particular, are an essential tool for mitigating the effects of urbanization and landscape fragmentation by preserving a pathway for wildlife movement between landscapes. Connectivity fosters the genetic diversity and wildlife movement critical for ecosystem health. Furthermore, as a designated 'climate change corridor'¹, this last available Corridor is essential for maintaining resiliency in the face of climate change. Without this vital connection, the coastal ecosystem will continue to degrade over time due to genetic isolation.

Completed in 2019, the Irvine Wildlife Camera Monitoring Study showed both the lack of targeted species – deer, bobcats, coyotes, and other small mammals -- using the Corridor, and the negative impacts of high human intrusion. The Study underscored the importance of a functional, sustainable wildlife corridor connecting the coastal and inland wilderness areas and made specific recommendations for improving Corridor function. Since the completion of the Study, the Irvine-Laguna Wildlife Corridor

¹ Olson, et al. 2009

Working Group has researched possible opportunities for the funding and implementation of improvements that address the barriers identified in the Study (e.g., rip-rap and sediment removal, vegetation management and fencing, among other solutions).

Partners: The Laguna Greenbelt, Inc. is committed to bringing the vision of a completed and functional Corridor to reality by empowering the Irvine-Laguna Wildlife Corridor Working Group to collaborate with local stakeholders and Partners. Partners will be supporting the Corridor by actively participating in upcoming conversations and convening and other activities focused on honing, planning, and implementing specific remediations. By signing this Partner Charter, the organizations and government entities essential to success, signify collaboration in implementing the Irvine-Laguna Wildlife Corridor.

Signed:

Dated:



DAY USE:
7:00 A.M. - SUNSET
PARKING:
8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.

Laguna Coast Wilderness Park

WILDERNESS PARK

7000 ACRES OF SOMETHING NEW • SEE AN ORANGE-THROATED WHIPTAIL
GO ON A NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT • ENJOY PANORAMIC OCEAN VIEWS

Legend:

- Park Office
- Restroom
- Parking
- Water
- Scenic Overlook
- Public Access Gate
- Emergency Access Gate
- Interpretive Center/Interactive Programs
- Multi-use Trail
- Hiking Trail
- Public Street
- Easy Trail
- Moderate Trail
- Difficult Trail
- Trail Post

NOTE: All authorized trails appearing on this map are marked with trail posts all others are unauthorized.

Meet @ Nix Center
18751 Laguna Canyon Rd.
Laguna Beach, 92651

