

SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES
(Action Items Displayed in Italics)
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2024 — 3:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Fegraus, Vice Chair McCary, and Members Orgill (arrived during Item IV.D.), Norton, Clark, and Osborne (arrived during Item IV.D.) were present. Members Foley, Horne, Conners, Weiss, Litschi, and Felder 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.

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 SEPTEMBER 11, 2024 MEETING.

Motion: Vice Chair McCary

2nd: Member Norton

Unanimous vote to approve

IV. AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND PARTNERS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

A. LAGUNA CANYON FOUNDATION (LCF) UPDATE

Item IV.A was heard after Item IV.D.

Alan Kaufmann, LCF Interim Deputy Director, provided an update on trails, habitat restoration and fuel modification projects. LCF received a grant to help with maintenance at the Berns Canyon Preserve. Also working on a new 10-acre habitat restoration project to support Pacific Pocket Mouse re-introduction on the Laguna Laurel Parcel 5 with USFWS and OC Parks.

CA Prop 4 will likely provide more habitat restoration funding. LCF is in the planning stages for a new 20-acre project in the Pecten Reef area in Aliso & Wood Canyon Wilderness Park. And a 65-acre Project on Parcel 5 in Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.

First field trip for 5th graders to AWCWP for hands-on in the field instructions to understand restoration projects and perform water quality experiments. LCF currently has 167 certified volunteers, dedicating over 500 hours per month for park activities, 62 field trips planned for upcoming year, volunteer events for the public includes trail maintenance every weekend.

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Executive Director Karin Vardaman has retired. The Board and Executive Committee will review applicants and select a new ED by January 1, 2025.

B. LAGUNA BEACH OPEN SPACE UPDATE

No update at this time.

C. NATURAL COMMUNITIES COALITION (NCC) UPDATE

Darin Loughery, NCC Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, shared the following: Currently in discussions with an environmental planning/restoration firm to coordinate the development of a Trail Monitoring Master Plan for the 37,378-acre Nature Reserve of Orange County. The plan will inform and guide multiple public agencies and affiliated land managers (including CGA) on the biophysical, experiential, and managed conditions of trails within the NCCP/HCP. Additionally, the plan will educate landowners of the current condition and trending status of trail systems and serve as a science-based and conservation defensible process to make informed decisions about future trail plans, including trail restoration, maintenance practices or potential closure. The Trails Team – representatives from OC Parks, Irvine Ranch Conservancy, Laguna Canyon Foundation, California State Parks and Trails California Department of Fish and Wildlife will work with Dr. Monz, NCC staff and the project consultant to review the monitoring data and provide recommendations to landowners. Kick-off is planned for April 2025 to monitor approximately 160 miles of single and double track trails over a five-year span.

D. IRVINE OPEN SPACE PRESERVE UPDATE

Item IV.D was heard before Item IV.A.

David Cardon, Irvine Police Department Open Space Ranger, and Officer Jason Schaefer, Irvine Police Department Officer, shared the following: No e-bikes are allowed on the City of Irvine Open Space trails as stated in the city code “No motorized bicycle may be operated on a bicycle path or trail, bikeway, bicycle lane, equestrian trail, or hiking or recreational trail, unless it is within or adjacent to a roadway or unless the City of Irvine permits such operation.” Their educational program regarding e-bikes violations whether on a trail or street include: a 6-month education program, enforcement – First a warning, then a ticket which requires attending classes for those under 18. For street violations there is an administrative citation which requires attending traffic safety programs with their parents. If repeat offenders even for those under 18 have to go to court. California State Parks has a good definition of the different types of e-bikes. Irvine officers work with other south Orange County on the e-bike issue. Member Osborne shared information regarding illegal e-bikes on the LB School District property.

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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 the city sponsors monthly trail events – safety education, every other week hikes to meet the residents and distribute trail maps. The city has more than 80 miles of trails, trail guides are available on the city’s website.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and File Agenda Items IV.A–G.

Motion: Vice Chair McCary

2nd: Member Orgill

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

V. OC PARKS STAFF UPDATE

A. PARK OPERATIONS — ALL DEPARTMENTS UPDATE

Ev Mena, OC Parks Parks Division Manager, shared the following: 9 park staff recruits have passed the medical part of the process; hopefully 12 recruits will attend the mid-January Academy for 4 months, then 2 months for field training and at completion will be assigned to a park position. The OC Parks system has 52 rangers.

Mike Wilson, OC Parks Deputy Director, answered a question regarding this update.

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: Guinevere Santillano is our new Office Technician. Tene Green, former Office Technician has transferred to Mason Regional Park. The HVAC system was replaced on September 30th. A large number of visitors attended the park on Veterans Day and during the last two weeks attendance was unusually high due to an Instagram posting. Scavenger hunt tools have been popular with the younger park visitors.

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2. AWCWP Update

Adam Martinez, OC Parks Supervising Park Ranger I, shared the following: painting maintenance exterior and interior for the Nature Center; Clearing drains in preparation for rainy weather; goats are out of the park; found a damaged trail and illegal off-trail- -working on restoring the habitat; also many visitors on Veterans Day; Alpine/Nestall area of Top of the World, Laguna Beach – meeting with residents on the issues and working on solutions. Member Osborne will help with resident input.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and File Agenda Items V.A–B.

Motion: Member Orgill

2nd: Member Osborne

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 Orgill noted no update.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file and continue the item.

Motion: Member Orgill

2nd: Member Norton

Unanimous vote to receive and file and continue the item.

B. LAGUNA CANYON ROAD WIDENING AND SAFETY PROJECT UPDATE

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

Brian Kurnow, OC Parks Entitlements Division Manager, noted that the work continues. Park staff receives daily emails regarding the construction.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file and continue the item.

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Motion: Member Osborne

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

Unanimous vote to receive and file and continue the item.

C. LAGUNA COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN (LCAD) STUDENT CENTER DEVELOPMENT

City of Laguna Beach Staff, if available, will provide a report of the proposed developments at the Laguna College of Art and Design Student Center and any possible impacts to AWCWP.

No report from City of Laguna Beach Staff or LCAD.

Alan Kaufman, LCF Interim Deputy Director, noted that the wildlife camera study on the preserved area next to LCAD started a few months ago.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file and continue the item, if appropriate.

Motion: Member Osborne

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

Unanimous vote to receive and file and continue the item.

D. IRVINE WILDLIFE CORRIDOR UPDATE

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

Member Clark reported that the Wildlife Corridor Team recently met with CALTRANS to discuss issues; Wildlife Corridor Team will have a Strategy Meeting on November 14th to discuss 2025 plans; shared current list of public agencies and nonprofits who have signed on to the Partner Charter in support of the Wildlife Corridor; camera study by 5Points is continuing and showing wildlife using the corridor.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file and continue the item.

Motion: Chair Fegraus

2nd: Member Orgill

Unanimous vote to receive and file and continue the item.

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E. REVIEW OF THE 1998 LCWP GENERAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANS

Authority Members reviewing the LCWP General Development and Resource Management Plans will present ideas for an addendum to update the plans. Authority Members will discuss and receive additional comments on additional items of inclusion in the addendum.

Item VI.E was heard after Items VI.F–G.

Chair Fegraus and Members Clark and Norton shared the draft Addendum to the 1998 Laguna Coast Wilderness Park General Development and Resource Management Plans.

Jeaniene Casiello, OC Parks Planning and Design Manager, answered questions regarding the process for development.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

1. Discuss and incorporate information recommended for inclusion in the Addendum to the LCWP General Development and Resource Management Plans.
2. Continue the item.

Motion: Member Osborne

2nd: Member Orgill

Unanimous vote to continue the item.

F. APPOINTMENT OF AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE NATURAL COMMUNITIES COALITION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Natural Communities Coalition (NCC) Board of Directors comprises, in part, of a seat for an Ex-Officio Member representing the Authority. The Authority shall appoint an Authority Member to serve as the Ex-Officio Member and one Authority Member to serve as the Alternate Ex-Officio Member for the NCC Board of Directors.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

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

1. Ex-Officio Representative of the Coastal Greenbelt Authority for the Natural Communities Coalition Board of Directors
2. Alternate Ex-Officio Representative of the Coastal Greenbelt Authority for the Natural Communities Coalition Board of Directors

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Motion to nominate Member Norton as the Ex-Officio Representative of the Coastal Greenbelt Authority for the Natural Communities Coalition Board of Directors.

Motion: Member Osborne

2nd: Chair Fegraus

Unanimous vote to select Member Norton as Ex-Officio Representative of the Coastal Greenbelt Authority for the Natural Communities Coalition Board of Directors.

Motion to nominate Member Clark as the Alternate Ex-Officio Representative of the Coastal Greenbelt Authority for the Natural Communities Coalition Board of Directors.

Motion: Member Osborne

2nd: Chair Fegraus

Unanimous vote to select Member Clark as the Alternate Ex-Officio Representative of the Coastal Greenbelt Authority for the Natural Communities Coalition Board of Directors.

G. COASTAL GREENBELT AUTHORITY PROPOSED 2025 MEETING SCHEDULE

The Authority's 2025 Meeting Schedule is provided for review and approval.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Approve the Coastal Greenbelt Authority's 2025 Meeting Schedule.

Motion: Member Osborne

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

Unanimous vote to receive and file and continue the item.

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 January 8, 2025 meeting agenda.

Member Norton noted that she will provide Authority information to the County of Orange Fifth District staff for their weekly Supervisor's email messages. Chair Fegraus wished everyone Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for our parks in 2025.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT TO JANUARY 8, 2025 MEETING 4:20 p.m.

Motion: Vice Chair McCary

2nd: Member Orgill

Unanimous vote to adjourn to the January 8, 2025 Meeting.