

MINUTES
(Action Items Displayed in Italics)
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2021 — 3:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Fegraus and Members Iseman, Maloney, Prince and Felder were present. Voting Member Conners was absent.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public are welcome to address the Authority on items of public interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Authority and are not listed as an agenda item.

No comments were received from the public.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR (Items A–B)

The following items 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 July 14, 2021.

Motion: Member Maloney

2nd: Member Iseman

Approved 5–0

IV. CGA MEMBERS AND PARTNERS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

A. LAGUNA CANYON FOUNDATION UPDATE

Paula Olson, Laguna Canyon Foundation Senior Director, shared the following: planning for field trips for Santa Ana and Ocean View schools; some volunteer led hikes during the week; planning for volunteer certification classes for CPR; as of September 6th the Trail Ambassadors weekend program at the Alta Laguna site concluded; restoration programs include a burned area near Aliso Creek and Pecten Reef; volunteers are available to help with the OC Fire Watch program – each park manager has the authority to close their park and they are in touch with adjacent facilities about Red Flag conditions.

B. NATURAL COMMUNITIES COALITION UPDATE

Darin Loughrey, Natural Communities Coalition (NCC) representative, shared the following: the Strategic Plan for NCC was scheduled for consideration in September but waiting to present it at an in-person meeting; 4th year of convening with Utah State University staff for research/educational workshops planned for December, which will help with management decisions.

C. CITY OF LAGUNA BEACH OPEN SPACE UPDATE

Councilmember Iseman, Laguna Beach City Council member, noted the Arundo along Aliso Creek at Pacific Coast Highway is scheduled for removal by Orange County; city council has been lobbied by mountain bikers for expansion of trails for their use.

D. CITY OF IRVINE OPEN SPACE PRESERVE UPDATE

Casey Gnad, Open Space Administrator, noted the following: uptick in park visitors; placement of surveillance cameras to help understand visitor patterns in order to adjust staff coverage; recent park intrusions by motorcyclists; new signs are part of a pilot mile stone markers program to help with police response.

E. CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH OPEN SPACE UPDATE

Carissa Macias, new Natural Resources Coordinator, noted the Big Canyon restoration is complete; some guided field trips started by the Irvine Ranch Conservancy in Buck Gully.

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.

V. OC PARKS STAFF UPDATE

A. PARK OPERATIONS

John Gannaway, OC Parks Division Manager, shared the end of September departure news of Stacy Blackwood. OC Parks Director, Tom Starnes will serve as Interim Director; two vacant park staff positions are being filled, the recent and upcoming graduates of the Park Ranger Academy will bring the ranger staff total to 53; OC Parks will partner with Winston Vickers on a mountain lion study at Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park.

B. LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS AND ALISO AND WOOD CANYONS WILDERNESS PARKS SPOTLIGHT

Park staff will highlight recent accomplishments, activities and upcoming events

1. Laguna Coast Wilderness Park Update

Matt Stegner, OC Parks Supervising Park Ranger, shared the following: a new Pacific Pocket Mouse site on the Dilley Preserve section of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park (LCWP) was approved by the landowner, City of Laguna Beach, for a Federal restoration project; Jenn Prewitt has been promoted to Interim Supervising Park Ranger I at the Operations Support Group at OC Parks Headquarters; Bryan Glenn, Park Ranger II has joined the LCWP staff, he was previously at Laguna Niguel Regional Park; currently exploring ways for LCWP to coordinate with Crystal Cove State Park, Laguna Canyon Foundation at Ridge Park—a heavily used entrance to both the State and County parks.

2. Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park Update

Brad Barker, OC Parks Supervising Ranger, shared the following: on August 14th a fire on less than two acres of an unknown cause was quickly extinguished—the coastal sage habitat area is being restored now; extra patrols now utilizing reserve deputies on weekends to help with safety during the busy visitor times; discussion of how the various agencies can cooperate on the graffiti cleanups.

VI. DISCUSSION CALENDAR (Items A–C)

A. IRVINE WILDLIFE CORRIDOR REPORT

Report by Clark/Fegraus on Irvine Wildlife Corridor.

Report by Fegraus: updating the Living with Wildlife brochure created originally by Dr. Brown; continuing with Science Advisors seminars; planning a wildlife corridor tour for Irvine’s Mayor Kahn and staff on September 16th.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Receive and file.

*Motion: Chair Fegraus
2nd: Member Iseman
Approved 5–0*

B. CALTRANS LAGUNA CANYON ROAD PROJECT UPDATE

No new information available at this time.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Receive and file.

*Motion: Chair Fegraus
2nd: Member Iseman
Approved 5–0*

C. TRAIL USE DESIGNATIONS PILOT PROGRAM UPDATE

Update on the Trail Use Designations Pilot Program in LCWP and AWCWP.

No official report available, but it was noted that surveys of park users and visitors to the website have occurred. Public comments by a park user included the following: Lack of information about the possible project before it was presented as a project, opposed to change of trail uses without environmental review and planning which involves the park users; concern about one trail use dominating the trails and that OC Parks Commission isn't representing the wilderness park sufficiently.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

1. *Continue this item to the next meeting and record public and Authority Members' comments for updates to the park landowners.*

*Motion: Chair Fegraus
2nd: Member Maloney
Approved 5–0*

D. RETIREMENT OF OC PARKS DIRECTOR BLACKWOOD

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

1. *Prepare and send a Letter of Appreciation to retiring OC Parks Director Blackwood.*

*Motion: Chair Fegraus
2nd: Member Iseman
Approved 5–0*

Chair Fegraus will prepare the letter for distribution by OC Parks staff.

E. PECTEN REEF HABITAT RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT PROJECT TOUR

Review dates for a field trip to tour the project.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

1. Select at least one date to confirm with Laguna Canyon Foundation.
 - a. Possible Dates:

- Tuesday, 10/26/2021, 1:00–3:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, 11/3/2021, 1:00–3:00 p.m.
- Friday, 11/5/2021, 8:00–10:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, 11/10/2021, 1:00–3:00 p.m.

*Motion: Chair Fegraus
2nd: Member Maloney
Approved 5–0*

Availability was best for CGA members on November 10th and Fegraus and Park Staff will work with Laguna Canyon Foundation to find the best way to share the Pecten Reef restoration with the public and CGA members.

VII. AUTHORITY MEMBERS’ COMMENTS AND REPORT

At this time Authority Members may comment on non-agenda matters and ask questions of staff, provided that no action may be taken on off-agenda items unless authorized by law.

Member comments included: new graffiti near Canyon Acres — need for a coordinated effort to remove graffiti in the wilderness parks; request for CGA to have reports/presentations on the possibility of undergrounding utilities within LCWP.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT 5:30 p.m.

*Motion: Member Maloney
2nd: Member Felder
Approved 5–0*

Meeting adjourned to Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 3 p.m. Location TBD.