

SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES
(Action Items Displayed in Italics)
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2024 — 3:00 p.m.

Before formally starting the meeting, Chair Fegraus thanked the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park staff for their above and beyond assistance with the Elisabeth Brown Celebration of Life ceremony. It was a fitting tribute, well attended and appreciated by the Brown family.

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Fegraus, Vice Chair McCary, and Members Orgill, Norton, Clark, Osborne, and Felder were present. Members Foley, Horne, Conners, Weiss, and Litschi 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 JULY 10, 2024 MEETING.

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

IV. AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND PARTNERS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

A. LAGUNA CANYON FOUNDATION (LCF) UPDATE

Representative not available to provide an update at this time.

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: 2024–2026 Training for Habitat Restoration is underway with commitments to targeted individual species and endangered species. The restoration process using cattle grazing to remove invasives in the NCCP lands has not been implemented yet.

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Question by Member Orgill about how the guidelines under the NCCP deal with public use? Loughery noted that recreation uses are part of the monitoring under the program. Member Orgill noted that the City of Laguna Beach is still looking at the opportunity to enroll their open space land not included in the county park system in the NCCP.

D. IRVINE OPEN SPACE PRESERVE UPDATE

Representative not available to provide an update at this time. Member Felder would like more information regarding the City's e-bike ruling.

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: Vice Chair McCary

2nd: Member Osborne

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

V. OC PARKS STAFF UPDATE

A. PARK OPERATIONS — ALL DEPARTMENTS UPDATE

Derrick Ankerstar, OC Parks Operations Manager, shared the following: Recent Park Ranger recruitment, 12 candidates onboarded in November and December and will be in January 2025; one staff vacancy in both Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park and Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. Regarding the Airport Fire – O'Neill Regional Park and Caspers Wilderness Parks are closed along with activities in other parks in the fire area.

Question regarding the illegal trailhead in the Top of the World area – concern about fuel modification and delay with OC Permit. OC Parks must verify the area is within the allowed fuel modification boundaries. This permit has been issued. In areas adjacent to OC Parks surveys are done before the goats arrive to be sure the boundaries are correct.

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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: The historical information presented by Celebration speakers was appreciated by the park staff; 70 foot fuel modification has been done around the Nix Nature Center; question about the Pacific Pocket Mouse population – not stable – varies from year to year, looking at a second site but it is probably a few year away; Tene Greene, Office Technician is transferring to Mason Regional Park, for a certain time period will split her hours between the two parks, OC Parks is in the process of recruiting a new staff person, more than ever there is a need for volunteers at the Nix Nature Center. There was a question about the City of Irvine’s study of access into the Planning Area 18 near the intersection of Lake Forest and Bake Parkways – no information available at this time.

Chair Fegraus thanked Tene Greene for her work at the Nix Nature Center and her support of the Authority administrative functions. We will miss her.

2. AWCWP Update

Adam Martinez, OC Parks Supervising Park Ranger I, shared the following: There is a new fossil dig near the AWCWP Nature Center; some park visitors required medical assistance during the recent excessive heat, met with the City of Laguna Beach regarding the goat program. Some communication issues by Authority members included the question of the ownership of the Carolyn Wood Knoll – the dedication sign has been removed – which jurisdiction can put it back? Rock Cave issue – unauthorized trail to the entrance – Laguna Beach Park Rangers and OC Parks need to work together on this issue.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and File Agenda Items V.A–B.

Motion: Vice Chair McCary

2nd: Member Osborne

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

VI. DISCUSSION CALENDAR (ITEM(S) A–E)

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.

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Representative not available to provide an update at this time. Chair Fegraus noted she had attended the September 5, 2024 Laguna Canyon Road: Protect & Connect Open House. City staff indicated that undergrounding the utilities in the LCWP is no longer an option.

Penny Milne, Canyon Alliance of Neighborhoods Defense Organization President, commented on her joy regarding no undergrounding taking place but raised concerns regarding other impacts to LCWP and the wildlife corridor.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file and continue the item.

Motion: Member Osborne

2nd: Member Orgill

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 no new activity. Question of Stagecoach South Trail closed because of the project?

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file and continue the item.

Motion: Vice Chair McCary

2nd: Member Orgill

Unanimous vote to receive and file and continue the item.

C. LAGUNA COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN 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.

Representative not available to provide an update at this time.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file and continue the item, if appropriate.

Motion: Member Osborne

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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 presented the highlights of the Wildlife Corridor project.

- *Proposition 4 on the November 2024 ballot will have funds for wildlife corridors.*
- *Partner Charter signers continue to emerge. This topic and the endorsement of the 30X30 project will be before the cities of Laguna Woods and Laguna Beach in the next few weeks.*
- *City of Irvine discussions are ongoing about a wildlife corridor interpretative kiosk to help the Great Park residents understand the role of a wildlife corridor*
- *Recent wildlife corridor tours included one for the Laguna Greenbelt board highlighting the difficulties of animal passage at Interstate 5. Caltrans and other stakeholder groups have also requested a tour.*
- *Recent camera studies in the restored Great Park section of the wildlife corridor show wildlife movement.*

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file and continue the item.

Motion: Vice Chair McCary

2nd: Member Norton

Unanimous vote to receive and file and continue the item.

E. 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.

Chair Fegraus reviewed the draft Addendum with the CGA Members, Public and OC Parks staff. Many suggestions were made including:

- *Use same titles as 1998 original documents.*

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- *Tie new suggestions to original documents — for example — New Access Points — See RMP Section V Public Access, page 65 and GDP Section V, page 34.*
- *In Opening Summary include how many miles of trails in LCWP.*
- *More explanation of term “south coast wilderness”.*
- *Population of Orange County at park’s creation time and now. What is this impact on LCWP?*
- *Importance of park etiquette — stay on the trails, no dogs, e-bikes.*
- *Timeline suggestions: 1988 City of Laguna Beach decision about the Carmen Sandling development at Top of the World — created a park; CA Prop 70; operational change for Laguna Heights area now covered by Aliso & Wood Canyons Wilderness Park; distinguish between the Laguna Laurel purchase and the Option 5 and Planning Area 18 dedication, include maps; acreage for CCSP; add 2004 document of the OC Board of Supervisors action for long-term leases to include land within LCWP and AWCWP - include Lease Agreements in the References.*
- *Agreements: Include lease agreements between OC and the cities of Laguna Beach and Laguna Woods — include actual Leases in References.*
- *New Access Points: legal access points without parking, name of trail at Laguna Bowl?*
- *Fire Prevention: Link to Fuel Modification Plan — NCC will help with documentation.*
- *Hydrology: Research and find dates/documents for early Lake studies — include in References.*
- *Education and Interpretive Programs: Be sure LCWP Resource Specialist reviews text for editing and additional information.*
- *Goals moving forward: Question of Trail Management — how to manage large number of trail users; Wildlife Corridor connections within LCWP utilizing Laguna Canyon Road undercrossings and larger wildlife corridor connection within the 22,000-wilderness area of parks and preserves.*
- *How to keep the public agencies’ commitment and coordination to keep the connections within their jurisdictions?*
- *Insert word “legal” prior to access points under “New Access Points”.*

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Chair Fegraus noted that this is the first draft of Addendum #1. CGA members are still working on the Nix Nature Center Addendum. In order to incorporate as much information as possible we should change the approval date to at least January 2025. When we sent a Budget Request letter to OC Parks and the Board of Supervisors we didn't state a specific date for our completion.

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 to work on the Addendums and to 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 November 13, 2024 meeting agenda.

Authority Members welcomed Member Barbara Norton as the Member-At-Large appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. Member Norton's history and understanding of the parks will be invaluable as we continue to support the two wilderness parks.

Regarding Ex-officio membership to the Natural Communities Coalition. Tom Maloney was the Authority member with Mary Fegraus as Alternate. We should elect new representation at our next meeting.

Member Felder noted that the CA Prop 4 on the November ballot does have wildlife corridor funding.

Chair Fegraus suggested that in a future meeting we should talk about representation from Non-Voting Members as stated in the Coastal Greenbelt Authority Bylaws.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT TO NOVEMBER 13, 2024 MEETING 5:20 p.m.

Motion: Member Osborne

2nd: Member Norton

Unanimous vote to adjourn to the November 13, 2024 Meeting.

2024 Addendum to the
1998 Laguna Coast Wilderness Park General Development and Resource Management Plans

**** Indicates we still have questions and need more research

I. Introduction

Since 1998 there have been many changes to Laguna Coast Wilderness Park (LCWP). These include newly acquired land and ownership. Currently approximately 7,000 acres of wilderness with approximately 42 miles of trails are owned by the County of Orange, State of California, Cities of Laguna Beach and Laguna Woods. These are managed by Orange County Parks.

The public agencies, Southern California Edison and Laguna Beach County Water District, are located within LCWP perimeter but operate independently under agreements with Orange County. Multiple ownership presents challenges but also opportunities for collaboration. The intent of preserving this land remains the same as stated in the 1990 purchase agreement – “Habitat preservation and passive recreation.”

The preservation of LCWP united the preservation of approximately 22,000 acres of wilderness parks and preserves with contiguous boundaries in Orange County. This area, the South Coast Wilderness, includes City of Newport Open Space, Crystal Cove State Park, some of the City of Irvine Open Space Preserves, Laguna Coast Wilderness Park, Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park, City of Laguna Beach Open Space and City of Laguna Woods Open Space, and the Newport Beach Homeowners Association land near Pacific Ridge Trail.

Art is a part of the history of LCWP and the larger Laguna community. Within the park art is used for interpretative signage, inherent in each of the Nix Nature Center exhibits, architecturally visible as the Painters’ Pier, is explicit in educational activities.

The Coastal Greenbelt Authority (CGA), established by the 1990 Laguna Laurel purchase agreement, remains the oversight authority of the management of LCWP. In that role CGA initiated the development of this Addendum.

Include CGA Bylaws in either the Reference section or the Appendix. Provide the link to the OC Parks website for current CGA meetings/minutes and Bylaws.

II. Timeline of Preservation Actions

The following Timeline illustrates the progress of the preservation of land within the coastal canyons of Orange County.

1972 County of Orange Board of Supervisors approved the concept of a Laguna Greenbelt at the urging of Jim Dilley, a Laguna bookstore owner who formed the nonprofit, Laguna Greenbelt Inc.

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- 1978 City of Laguna Beach purchased the Laguna Canyon area now called the James Dilley Greenbelt Preserve (376 acres) in Laguna Coast Wilderness Park
- 1979 Dedication of Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park through development agreement with the Mission Viejo Company and the County of Orange. Originally 4,200 acres, currently 4,500 acres.
- 1984 State of California purchased The Irvine Company land for Crystal Cove State Park – 2,791 acres of inland and coastal land
- 1988 Orange County Board of Supervisors approved The Irvine Company’s Laguna Laurel Development Plan which would have created a new community in Laguna Canyon.
- 1988 California Proposition 70 passed, allowing for the purchase of Carolyn Wood Knoll at Top of the World.

Preservation of the Carman Sandling development of “Honda Hills” – still needs research

- 1989 More than 8,000 Southern California residents participated in the Walk in Laguna Canyon on November 11th to protest the development in Laguna Canyon and to show their support for preserving the land.
- 1990 At the California November election almost 80% of Laguna Beach voters approved Proposition H, a \$20 million bond for the purchase of the land planned for the Laguna Laurel Development. This was the highest vote for a California bond measure since 1956.
- 1990 Historic Laguna Laurel Purchase Agreement between The Irvine Company, City of Laguna Beach, County of Orange and State of California to purchase the land slated for the Laguna Laurel development. The purchase agreement was in five Option payments.

June 30,1991	\$33 million	Preserved 1,286 acres
June 30,1992	\$3 million	Preserved 26 acres
April 9, 1993	\$4 million	Preserved 50 acres
October 15,1993	\$5 million	Preserved 41 acres

The purchase agreement ended June 30, 1995, due to a lack of funding for the 5th Option of \$33 million for 173 acres. The cities of Irvine, Laguna Beach, Laguna Hills, Leisure World Mutuals, Orange County and Laguna Canyon Foundation approved a Joint Statement of concern for the use of the land. They continued to work with The Irvine Company to reach an agreement for the last developable Laguna Laurel parcel within Laguna Canyon approved for more than 1,500 housing units.

The Laguna Laurel Purchase Agreement also established the Coastal Greenbelt Authority. Members at that time included the landowners: City of Laguna Beach, County of Orange and State of California.

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- April 1993 Dedication of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. Public access started under **Managed Access for docent led** tours one weekend per month.
- 1998 Newport Coast Development agreement with the County of Orange, adding 2,000 acres to Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. This included Ridge Park, Boat Canyon and Emerald Canyon and Dartmoor.
- January 2000 James and Rosemary Nix pledge \$500,000 for a nature center at Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. The Nix Nature Center opened to the public on March 17, 2007
- 2000 California Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, and Coastal Protection Bond Act (Proposition 12) included a \$12.5 million line item to undertake projects for the South Coast Wilderness system of coastal canyons and watersheds in south Orange County, including, but not limited to, properties for Laguna Coast Wilderness Park and Aliso & Wood Canyons Wilderness Park.
- 2001 Gift by The Irvine Company to the County of Orange of 11,000 acres which included the remaining Laguna Laurel Development land (Parcel 5), 173 acres, for public open space.
- 2002 City of Laguna Woods purchased 10.6 acres with the first funding from the 2000 State Proposition 12 through the Coastal Conservancy. Land is leased to the County of Orange for management as part of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. This acquisition established the City of Laguna Woods as a member of the Coastal Greenbelt Authority.
- 2004 Orange County Board of Supervisors approved the concept of long-term leases to include land not owned by the County of Orange under the management of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park and Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park. **Include chart of acquired parcels with parcel data as a reference.**
- 2004 City of Laguna Beach purchased the Trinity 36-acre parcel and the Wainwright 32-acre parcel with Prop 12 Funds and leased the parcels to the County of Orange for management as part of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.
- 2004 Ridge Park was dedicated as part of the Newport Coast Agreement with the County of Orange.
- 2006 City of Laguna Beach purchased the Decker 11.43-acre parcel with Prop 12 Funds and leased the parcel to the County of Orange for management as part of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.
- 2006 Realignment of Laguna Canyon Road from the I-5 freeway to the 73 creating a number of undercrossings that provide trail connections and improve wildlife movement to ensure diversity. The realignment unified Lakes 1 and 2 and eliminated seasonal flooding along the road.

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- March 17, 2007 Nix Nature Center Dedication Ceremony led by Fifth District Supervisor Tom Wilson. Total cost of \$3.5 million for interpretive exhibits and administrative buildings (Total 3,000 square feet with 2,300 square feet of exhibit space).
- 2007 City of Laguna Beach purchased the Haun 10.45-acre parcel, the Jaysu 27.92-acre parcel, the Stonefield 50.37-acre parcel and the Chao 58.4-acre parcel with Prop 12 Funds and leased the parcels to the County of Orange for management as part of the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.
- 2008 City of Laguna Beach purchased the SBD 10.38-acres with Prop 12 Funds.
- 2009 City of Laguna Beach purchased the Bunn-Moore 4.5-acre parcel with Prop 12 Funds
- 2012 City of Laguna Beach purchased the McGraw 1.99-acre parcel with Prop 12 Funds
- 2013 City of Laguna Beach purchased the McGehee 56.25-acre parcel with Prop 12 Funds

Important Agreements regarding LCWP – The following are agreements that impact LCWP -

- 1996 Natural Community Conservation Plan and Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) for the Coastal Subregion includes LCWP
- 2003 County of Orange and Laguna Canyon Foundation Agreement for the development of the Nix Nature Center and interpretive exhibits
- 2004 Orange County Board of Supervisors approve long-term lease agreements between Orange County and the cities of Laguna Beach and Laguna Woods for OC Parks to manage these lands as part of Laguna Coast and Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Parks
- 2006 County of Orange and Laguna Canyon Foundation Agreement for Mary’s Trail adjacent to the Nix Nature Center to serve as an interpretative and a connecting trail to existing trails
- 2008 County of Orange and Laguna Canyon Foundation (LCF) Agreement for LCF support of park projects and volunteer programs
- 2016 Wildland Fire Management Plan (WFMP) as part of the NCCP/HCP program
- 2019 Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Plan (HREP) Update of the original 2003 HREP as part of the NCCP/HCP program

Date? County of Orange and Southern California Edison agreement to manage Edison Trail as part of LCWP

Date? County of Orange and Ridge Homeowners Association agreement regarding Pacific Ridge Trail.

Date? County of Orange and Newport Coast Development Agreement (Boat Road)

Dates Lease agreements between Orange County and the cities of Laguna Beach and Laguna Woods for parcels acquired with Prop 12 funds.

Include in References with links to the Agreement documents on OC Parks website

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III. Existing Park Development and Ongoing Implementation

2024 Laguna Coast Wilderness Park

Management Practices History

- LCWP opened in 1993 under Managed Access practices with limited access.
- Today Adaptive Management Practices guide the management of access and habitat protection. This strategy provides the ability to close and open trails, regulate visitor use, such as hiking, biking, and equestrian uses, to prevent overuse and habitat damage and allow for restoration activities. The strategy stresses the importance of Park Etiquette – stay on the trails, no dogs or e-bikes.
- **Trail Maintenance and Repair – include process**
- Currently LCWP is open 7 days a week from 7 a.m. to Sunset and Parking Areas 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Include in References a link to OC Parks/LCWP website

Current LCWP Management and Operations

- Plans were initially outlined through an Interim Operations Plan, then detailed under the 1998 GDP and RMP documents.
- With the inclusion of OC Parks in the Community Resources Department, there was a change in the management structure. The current OC Parks management team for LCWP includes the LCWP Supervising Ranger, Laguna Canyon Operations Manager and OC Parks Division Manager. This team is responsible for all the LCWP park staff management and operations and obligations.

Legal New Access Points – need new Staging Areas (Parking) and Trail Access Maps and to include in References a link to OCParks website

- At the time of the 1993 opening of LCWP there were four access points known as Staging Areas with fee parking – Big Bend, James Dilley Preserve, Little Sycamore Canyon and Willow Canyon (which replaced the Laurel Canyon Staging area noted in the 1998 General Development and Resource Management Plans). Later multi-use access designated at the Laguna Bowl **(trail name?)** on Laguna Canyon Road with metered Laguna Beach street parking.
- Today access points also include:
 - Ridge Park, Gate 9, dedicated in 2004, providing entry to LCWP, Crystal Cove State Park and City of Irvine Open Space. Only street parking is available.
 - Access points from Crystal Cove State Park along Bommer Ridge Trail
 - Woods End, near the intersection of El Toro Road and Aliso Creek Road, with limited parking, providing access to the LCWP’s James Dilley section and onward to Little Sycamore Canyon using the Laguna Canyon Road undercrossing.

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- Laguna Beach Dartmoor and Poplar Streets providing public access to the southern portion of LCWP with limited street parking only.
- Stairsteps Trail, no parking available, or reached from Laguna Beach's Alta Laguna Park with its free parking lot by first hiking West Ridge Trail.
- Within the City of Irvine: Quail Hill, Shady Canyon, Bommer Canyon, Stagecoach North allows hikers access to LCWP.

Trails – *Include in Reference a website link to the latest trails map*

Today LCWP has approximately 42 miles of trails including the following new, legal trails:

New Trails

- Woods End Trail, Ridge Top, Barbara's Lake Trail, Gravel Trail, Edison Trail, Blackjack Trail in the Dilley section of LCWP
- Bommer Ridge, Old Emerald Trail – starts near bottom of Emerald Canyon to middle of Emerald Canyon, Emerald Canyon Road – from Post 14 to back gate of Emerald Bay, Old Emerald Falls Trail, Lizard Trail
- Mary's Trail, dedicated in 2007, adjacent to the Nix Nature Center

Renamed Trails

- BVD was renamed Old Emerald Falls Trail
- Bea Whittlesey Trail was renamed Canyon Trail

Renamed Areas

- Laguna Laurel – this was the original name of the proposed development. Laurel Canyon is a key area of LCWP.
- Sycamore Hills – this was the original name of the current James Dilley Preserve.
- Parcel 5 – was dedicated by The Irvine Company to Orange County. Use today? Also need Laguna Laurel Development map

Fire Prevention

1995 the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) was established as a Joint Powers Authority which includes LCWP and adjoining parkland. Within the agreements the NCCP/HCP program has a specific Fuel Modification Plan for Willow Canyon and Little Sycamore Canyon including the Nix Nature Center. *Provide link to Fuel Modification Plan – Natural Communities Coalition will help with documentation.*

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Hydrology *Include Photo of Interpretive Sign at Barbara's Lake*

With the realignment of Laguna Canyon Road, there are now two lakes instead of the original three. Barbara's Lake and the small pond nicknamed Bubbles Pond are now connected along their original natural alignment. Barbara's Lake was named after Barbara Stuart, a founding member of Laguna Greenbelt, Inc.

? Lake water studies have been done – dates? Laguna Greenbelt Inc did an early one

Biological Resources

A number of biological studies have been done in addition to the ones with the NCCP/HCP program. Find and include them in the Reference section.

Include more recent study by the San Diego Natural History Museum, and on-going camera monitoring of Barbara's Lake, the Main Corridor, and Stagecoach North conducted, monitored and catalogued by volunteers.

IV. Park Information and Signage *Include photos of various signs*

The following signs designate trail use and park etiquette. All trails have specific use designations to protect the habitat. Trail designations include Hiking Only, Multi-Use includes Hiking, Biking and Equestrian uses. E-bikes and any unauthorized motorized vehicles are not permitted on any trails. Dogs are forbidden in any part of LCWP. Camping is not permitted in LCWP. This information appears on kiosks, maps, websites and at all authorized public access sites.

Orientation Panels – *include photos – need to locate? – check with LCF*

The plein-air paintings, owned by the Laguna Canyon Foundation, and displayed in the Nix Nature Center Gallery, are the originals used for a series of orientation panels installed throughout the park in 2001. These Orientation Panels are at the six entrances to key trails. The panels orient visitors to the “mosaic” that is the South Coast Wilderness, introduce visitors to the unique qualities of each access point and encourage responsible park use.

The orientation signs received a second-place award in the Wayfarer Category from the National Association for Interpretation in the 2002 national interpretation competition. The development of the six orientation signs was funded by a grant from The Bren Foundation and designed by The Acorn Group and SoLa Creative.

2009 Monument Signs – *include photos*

Laguna Canyon Foundation (LCF) and OC Parks managed the design and implementation by SoLA Creative to create and install Monument Signs at each of the four staging areas – Dilley Greenbelt, Big Bend, Willow Canyon, Nix Nature Center. The project was funded by Laguna Canyon Foundation donors

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including James and Rosemary Nix. The LCF and County of Orange 2008 agreement provides the basis for LCF to commit financial resources to assist in park enhancements and improvements.

Art and LCWP

Art is part of the history of LCWP and the larger Laguna Community. For the past one hundred years, plein air artists have interpreted and recorded the rich wilderness landscape through oils, watercolors and other media. Through art the awareness is raised of the region's beauty and fragility. Within the park art is used for interpretative signage, inherent in each of the Nix Nature Center exhibits, architecturally visible as the Painters Pier and seen in collaboration with art education entities such as the Laguna College of Art and Design.

V. Educational Programming

Volunteer Programs

Laguna Canyon Foundation and OC Parks sponsor volunteer training programs which are critical for the park's operations. These trainings happen upon volunteer request and/or interest. Volunteers can sign up for these trainings on <https://letsqooutside.org/volunteer/> or request training from OC Parks or Laguna Canyon Foundation staff. Introductory training (Facility Certification) is required for all volunteers in LCWP, and additional trainings are required for more specific positions, including volunteering at the Nix Nature Center, Backcountry Patrol, leading a guided hike, Wildlife Camera project, trail maintenance, restoration projects and creating new programs.

In recent years Laguna Canyon Foundation has provided more than 5,000 hours of yearly service as long-term volunteers. Volunteers are an integral part of LCWP's viability and the park's economy.

Provide website links..... LCF, OC Parks, Let's Go Outside. Laguna Canyon Foundation –
<http://laqunacanyon.org> <http://ocparks.com> <http://letsqooutside.org>

Education and Interpretive Programs

Laguna Canyon Foundation (LCF) staff and volunteers along with the LCWP Resource Specialist provide many educational and interpretive programs. LCF yearly brings more than 1,300 second through fifth grade students from Title 1 partner schools and select local schools for a day on the trail, offering field trips that follow Next-Generation Science Standards at little to no cost to the schools or students.

The OC Parks Resource Specialist at LCWP is a full-time position dedicated to resource protection and public outreach including education events at LCWP focusing on this park specifically, including kid-friendly and family programs. Public involvement is encouraged through sponsored tours for those of all abilities, cell phone tours, helpful brochures, exhibits, videos, interactive experiences, and the "What Did You See Today?" posts on a whiteboard at the Nix Nature Center which can augment the camera

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studies coordinated by volunteers. These and other programs are ways to help the public understand they have a responsibility to observe and care for the natural environment.

Volunteers also lead educational hikes each week for those interested in such topics as bobcats, birding, seasonal plants, physical fitness, geology, bats, insects, general discovery, and holiday events that encourage them to explore the outdoors as they participate in the chosen topic of interest. These events are detailed and highlighted on the OC Parks website and on the Laguna Canyon Foundation event page where attendees must register to attend the event <https://lagunacanyon.org/events/>

Goals Moving Forward ---

- Maintain Native Plant Nursery Program managed by Laguna Canyon Foundation and OC Parks. It provides an ongoing plant source for restoration projects. Volunteers are welcome.
- Provide website links for studies done through the NCCP/HCP program, universities, public and nonprofit organizations.
- Preserve Historical Wildlife database from camera studies. Important to continue under the direction of the Resource Specialist.
- Coordinate all studies with the OC Parks Natural Resources Team.
- Implement restoration projects as a result of studies.
- Address Question of Trail Management – how to manage large number of trail users. Recognizing the population of Orange County at the time of the park’s creation, what it is now and what it might be in the future. How can we maintain the integrity of the park as the human impact increases?
- Acknowledge the importance of the existing wildlife corridors at Laguna Canyon Road, the larger connections with the South Coast Wilderness parks and preserves, and the yet to-be-completed wildlife corridor connecting the South Coast Wilderness with the Cleveland National Forest as well as advocating for the wildlife crossing at Big Bend on Laguna Canyon Road.
Importance to keeping the commitment and coordination of the public agencies to keep the connections viable to their open space jurisdictions.
- Update Nix Nature Center exhibits with more interactive elements, newer technology, and in accordance with NAGPRA (*spell out this acronym*), as well as our tribal partners.
- Finalize the hiring of the previously approved additional Park Range II position.
- Maintain Parcel 5 as the only wildlife refuge area in the South Coast Wilderness parks and preserves not impacted by public access.

COASTAL GREENBELT AUTHORITY

STAFF REPORT

FROM: Ev Mena, Acting Executive Officer

DATE: November 13, 2024

SUBJECT: Coastal Greenbelt Authority's Proposed 2025 Meeting Schedule

A proposed schedule of 2025 meeting dates is provided below for the Authority's review. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every other month at the City of Laguna Woods Council Chambers at 3:00 p.m., but confirmed meeting locations and field trips will be noted on the agenda prior to the meeting.

Wednesday, January 8, 2025

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

Wednesday, May 14, 2025

Wednesday, July 9, 2025


Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Approve the Coastal Greenbelt Authority's 2025 Meeting Schedule.


Ev Mena