

SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES
(Action Items Displayed in Italics)
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2025 — 3:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Fegraus, Vice Chair McCary, and Members Orgill, Clark, Lee, and Osborne were present. Members Foley, Norton, 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 NOVEMBER 13, 2024 MEETING.

Motion: Vice Chair McCary

2nd: Member Orgill

Unanimous vote to approve

Chair Fegraus welcomed Member Lee as the newest Alternate Member for the City of Laguna Woods and Member Lee briefly introduced herself.

IV. AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND PARTNERS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES (ITEM(S) A–G)

A. LAGUNA CANYON FOUNDATION (LCF) UPDATE

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

Scott Thomas, the new LCF Executive Director, was welcomed by Chair Fegraus and provided an update on the following: 2024 highlights: 12.2 miles of the 21 trails trail were repaired and restored for all trail users; restored over 200 acres with planting and fuel modification in conservation projects; 2,200 students on 52 field trips; implemented two new education programs for 5th and 6th grade students; volunteers logged 9,700 hours; coordinated 300 events for the public. Upcoming activities include: OC Parks/LCF Native Plant Nursery Open House on Saturday, January 18 from 12:30 to 4 p.m. Public welcome to come and learn more about native plants - Information is on the LCF website; participating in the restoration of the 65 acre parcel as part of the Pacific Pocket Mouse project.

B. LAGUNA BEACH OPEN SPACE UPDATE

No update at this time.

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C. NATURAL COMMUNITIES COALITION (NCC) UPDATE

Darin Loughrey, NCC Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, shared the following: the January NCC newsletter on The Economic Impacts of Open Space illustrated how the properties enrolled in the Orange County Central-Coastal Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCCP/HCP) positively contribute to the economic sustainability of our area. It defines the economic benefits derived from open spaces and wilderness parks. In addition, the valuation of ecosystems is further explored through the growing industry of Ecotourism and continuing efforts to embrace a concept known as Gross Ecosystem Product (GEP). The informative newsletter is available at <https://occonservation.org/>

D. IRVINE OPEN SPACE PRESERVE UPDATE

Representative not available to provide an update at this time.

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

No update at this time.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and File Agenda Items IV.A–G.

Motion: Member Osborne

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

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

V. OC PARKS STAFF UPDATES (ITEM(S) A–B)

A. PARK OPERATIONS — ALL DEPARTMENTS UPDATE

Ev Mena, OC Parks Parks Division Manager, shared the following: new Orange County First District Supervisor – Janet Nguyen; some impact from the winds with closure or power outage at a number of parks; Travis Martz as of January 24 will be the new Operations Manager overseeing the Saddleback and Foothill Operations Group; New Park Ranger Academy starts January 15 with 10 recruits for 4 months

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of classroom activities and 2 months of in-the-field training. Current graduates started onboarding at Headquarters and are now at park facilities.

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: Rain - July 1, 2024 to now was 1/10 inch, a year ago was 6 inches, two years ago 9 inches; Volunteer Hours during 2023-2024 fiscal year – LCWP 5,500 hours, AWCWP 3,800 hours plus hours by Laguna Canyon Foundation; looking at installing a bridge over Laurel Creek – more information later; Attendance – During 1998 with 3,400 visitors, During 2024 was 232,000 visitors. Ranger Megan Matchett has left OC Parks which leaves LCWP short a ranger. CGA members noted Ranger Matchett's positive impact on the park and wished her the best.

2. AWCWP Update

Adam Martinez, OC Parks Supervising Park Ranger I, shared the following: Received seed for the reseeding in the 5 Oaks area; painting interior of the Visitor Center and outside eaves; remulching the picnic area near the Visitor Center; new ranger Nikee Chambers from the last Academy graduates; Holidays were busy with visitors, but crowds have reduced following the holidays. January 9th fire training and later in January the Laguna Beach Park Rangers and AWCWP staff will meet for fire training and understanding monitoring and procedures. Questions were asked about fire procedures. These were explained as: Locate the fire, directions to the fire, communications with OC Parks and Laguna Beach, evacuation of visitors, use of police for neighborhood evacuations, use resources of fire hydrants within the park and city, best roads and/or trails for firefighting. Question of how can OC Parks use cameras with AI features to spot a fire?

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and File Agenda Items V.A–B.

Motion: Member Orgill

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

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

VI. DISCUSSION CALENDAR (ITEM(S) A–H)

A. LCWP LAGUNA LAUREL PACIFIC POCKET MOUSE INTRODUCTION

Staff from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service will present on a new Pacific Pocket Mouse project at LCWP.

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William Miller, United States Fish and Wildlife Service Biomonitor, gave a presentation on the new Pacific Pocket Mouse project. The Nature Conservancy holds the conservation easement over the proposed site. The Pacific Pocket Mouse is on the Endangered Species Act. The goal is to establish 10 stable sites for the Pacific Pocket Mouse with the hope of delisting them in the future. The presentation is included with the Minutes. Authority looks forward to hearing more about the project.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

1. Authorize the Chair to prepare and issue a letter to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service in support of the project, if appropriate.
2. Receive and file.

Motion: Chair Fegraus

2nd: Member Osborne

Unanimous vote to authorize Chair Fegraus to prepare and issue a letter in support of the project and to receive and file the item.

B. 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.

No updates on the Project at this time.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file and continue the item.

Item was received and filed and continued.

C. 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.

Item was received and filed and continued.

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D. 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.

Penny Milne, Canyon Alliance of Neighborhoods Defense Organization President, commented on the LCF camera study of the project area before and during construction and after will provide valuable information for the City of Laguna Beach's Laguna Canyon Road Protect and Connect project.

No updates on the Project at this time.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file and continue the item, if appropriate.

Item was received and filed and continued.

E. IRVINE WILDLIFE CORRIDOR UPDATE

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

Member Clark shared the following: numerous wildlife corridor tours in December including state agencies; Laguna Greenbelt, Inc has hired a consultant for the project who has worked on the Annenberg 101 wildlife corridor project; Laguna Greenbelt, Inc has recently received a \$10,000 grant to help fund current activities; a tour is scheduled for a UCI graduate class in environmental studies similar to ones the past two years. The UCI student tours are an excellent opportunity to present the challenges and receive their excellent comments.

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.

F. 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.

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Authority Members will discuss and receive additional comments on additional items of inclusion in the addendum.

Chair Fegraus shared current Team activities to update these documents. A key activity was a tour of the Nix Nature Center by the Wildlife Corridor Team hosted by LCWP staff and attended by Laguna Canyon Foundation representatives. This valuable tour pointed out many exhibits within the nature center that have been added or updated and those that need repair or replacement. Visitor comments were also discussed, including the most popular exhibits. Many thanks to OC Parks for organizing the tour. The Nix Nature Center was mentioned in the 1998 General Development and Resource Management Plans but the Center was not built until 2007. An outline of the Nix Nature Center Addendum was verbally shared and will be presented in more detail at the next Authority meeting.

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 to receive and file and continue the item: Chair Fegraus

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

Unanimous vote to receive and file and continue the item.

G. AUTHORITY ALTERNATE MEMBER LETTER OF APPRECIATION AND SUPPORT

Discussion of the preparation of a letter of appreciation to be sent to the Authority's former Alternate Member Shari L. Horne for her service to the Authority.

It was noted that former Alternate Member Horne joined the Authority on January 15, 2015.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Authorize the Chair to prepare and send a letter of appreciation to former Authority Alternate Member Shari L. Horne.

Motion: Chair Fegraus

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

Unanimous vote to authorize the Chair to prepare and send a letter of appreciation to former Authority Alternate Member Shari L. Horne.

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H. 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.

Motion to nominate Mary Fegraus as Coast Greenbelt Authority Chair: Member Osborne

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

Unanimous vote to select Mary Fegraus as Authority Chair.

Motion to nominate Annie McCary as Authority Vice Chair: Chair Fegraus

2nd: Member Osborne

Unanimous vote to select Annie McCary as Authority 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 12, 2025 meeting agenda.

No comments or reports at this time.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT TO MARCH 12, 2025 MEETING 4:55 p.m.

Motion: Vice Chair McCary

2nd: Member Osborne

Unanimous vote to adjourn to the March 12, 2025 Meeting.