

# LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM REPORT

## AUG 2024-OCT 2024

Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority

### Executive Summary

From August 2024 - October 2024, the Stewardship Program engaged a total of 113 volunteers who participated in community-based habitat restoration programs. The 206 hours worked by these volunteers contributed \$6,898.94 of in-kind services. These volunteers spread 500 pounds of mulch, helping to retain moisture in the soil, adding organics, and suppressing weeds. The Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewardship Program (LCWSP), in partnership with the Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust and Applied Energy Services (AES), hosted 5 field trips for students and Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust hosted 6 youth field trips from the BeSAFE program. Additionally, the Conservation Corps of Long Beach assisted with repairing trails to better accommodate land tour participants.

### Monthly Habitat Restoration Events

Monthly Habitat Restoration events take place at Zedler Marsh every 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month. Volunteers help with a plethora of activities from native plant installation, non-native plant removal, mulching, trash clean-ups, plant propagating, watering, site preparation, and trail clean-up.

The LCWSP hosted three monthly habitat restoration events during this period on Aug 3<sup>rd</sup>, Sept 7<sup>th</sup>, and Oct 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024. A total of 93 volunteers helped remove 140 pounds of trash, spread 500 pounds of mulch and removed 25 pounds of weeds. All this help from the community resulted in 186 hours of volunteer work time contributing \$6,229.14 worth of in-kind services. These events are supported by funding from the Orange County Community Foundation (OCCF) Warne Fund.

### Special Events

Community and school groups regularly reach out to participate in special community-based habitat restoration events. The LCWSP hosted two additional community-based habitat restoration events at Zedler Marsh during this period, Holland Partners corporate volunteer day held on August 9, 2024, and Audubon California habitat restoration event and educational event held on August 10, 2024. In total, 114 native plants were propagated, and 100 pounds of weeds were removed. A total of 20 volunteer hours were contributed with \$669.80 of in-kind services. These events are supported by funding from AES.

### Environmental Education Field Trips

The LCWSP continues to host a variety of youth groups and community members out at the wetlands. The Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust works each year to coordinate class and park field trips for underserved schools and parks. For these field trips the Land Trust provides a bus that picks up students from their park or school and transports them to Zedler Marsh. At Zedler Marsh, the LCWSP Environmental Educators offer an engaging and informative curriculum of ecological activities where youth participate in hands-on learning focused on the Los Cerritos Wetlands and Zedler Marsh. Since August 2024, the LCWSP hosted six field trips which accommodated

about 210 Long Beach youth through the BeSAFE program for Long Beach parks and five school field trips which accommodated 150 students. These field trips are sponsored by the Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust.

## Land Tours

### *Raptor Ramble, Heron Hike, Salt Marsh Stroll*

Each month, the LCWLT hosts a land tour and rotates through the Raptor Ramble, Heron Hike, or Salt Marsh Stroll. These tours immerse visitors in the unique habitats of Los Cerritos Wetlands and allow them to gain new perspectives on the purpose of these rare environments. Members of the public are encouraged to attend all three different tours to experience diverse wildlife encounters in the Los Cerritos Wetlands.

The Raptor Ramble was offered in August 2024, where 10 participants experienced the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands and encountered wildlife, including several bird species. This was an opportunity to also learn about the upcoming habitat restoration and the past and future uses of the site by native peoples.

A new tour called the “Salt Marsh Stroll” was hosted for 7 participants in September 2024 and 15 participants in October 2024. This new tour’s theme focuses on ethnobotany in the context of an established restoration site which has plants with defined characteristics, such as the thorns on California boxthorn and the aromatic needle-thick leaves on California sagebrush. Ethnobotany focuses on the traditional knowledge of plants and their many uses in cooking, medicine, building structures, and in ceremony. Tour guides focus on plant adaptations and special-status plants that are thriving at Zedler Marsh. The Salt Marsh Stroll covers the intricacies of plant ecology in the salt marsh and also the alkali meadow, coastal scrub, mulefat scrub, and other upland plant communities.

## Youth Workforce Development

The Conservation Corps of Long Beach (CCLB) dedicated fourteen workdays to habitat restoration activities in Zedler Marsh and Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands to help expand the impact of the stewardship team. CCLB has allowed our team to work efficiently with a larger field team to accomplish priority tasks such as trail repair, spreading mulch over degraded soils, maintain fencing, digging holes for planting, and removing nonnative plant species. The CCLB team is very versatile in that they can assist with sensitive plant communities and can take on laborious tasks to complete the job at hand. Their willingness to learn from LCWSP leaders has allowed us to continue to expand the skills and tasks that they can take on.



FIGURE 1. Habitat Restoration- Audubon weeding event 8.10.24



FIGURE 2. Habitat Restoration Trash Clean-up 8.03.24



FIGURE 3. Habitat Restoration- Holland Partners 8.09.24



FIGURE 4. Habitat Restoration- mulching and spreading branches 9.07.24



FIGURE 5. Land Tour- Raptor Ramble 8.03.24



FIGURE 6. Land Tour- Salt Marsh Stroll 9.07.24