

**Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority**

**Date:** **July 1, 2021**

**To:** **Governing Board Members**

**From:** **Sally Gee, Project Manager**  
**Eric Zahn, Principal, Tidal Influence**

**Through:** **Mark Stanley, Executive Officer**

**Subject:** **Item 12: Consideration of a resolution adopting the Los Cerritos Wetlands Habitat Restoration Plan**

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**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority (LCWA) adopt the Los Cerritos Wetlands Habitat Restoration Plan.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Following certification of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Plan Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) by the LCWA Governing Board, the Los Cerritos Wetlands Habitat Restoration Plan was finalized with input from public agencies, tribal representatives, stakeholders, landowners, and the community. The restoration design presented in the Los Cerritos Wetlands Habitat Restoration Plan is informed by the PEIR and public input while maintaining consistency with the framework provided by the Los Cerritos Wetlands Conceptual Restoration Plan (CRP). The purpose of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Habitat Restoration Plan is to provide a conceptual basis of design from a habitat perspective for the restoration of the entire Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex, and to provide guidance for future phases of the restoration process. Due to its size, the Plan is not attached to this report, but may be downloaded on the LCWA website at: [https://intoloscerritoswetlands.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/LCW-Restoration-Plan-Final-5\\_26\\_21.pdf](https://intoloscerritoswetlands.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/LCW-Restoration-Plan-Final-5_26_21.pdf).

The Los Cerritos Wetlands Habitat Restoration Plan contains the following sections:

- Executive Summary. This section summarizes the contents of the Plan
- Chapter 1, Introduction. This section discusses the need for restoration, the Program EIR and the organization of the Plan.
- Chapter 2, Goals and Objectives. This section reviews the goals and objectives of the LCWA's restoration planning program.
- Chapter 3, Opportunities and Constraints. This section reviews the opportunities for habitat restoration in LCW and discusses the constraints that exist to implement restoration projects.
- Chapter 4, Planning Framework. This section presents the historical and current ecological conditions of LCW and discusses the practice of restoring ecosystem processes and how to build ecological resilience. This section also analyzes the regional and local needs for this project.
- Chapter 5, Previous Restoration Designs. This section puts into context the previous restoration design iterations performed by the LCWA (CRP and PEIR) and discusses how this Plan conforms to and complements those previous efforts.

- Chapter 6, Basis of Design for Restoration of LCW. This section broadly discusses what habitat should be prioritized for restoration throughout LCW and speaks to how to restore and consider hydrology/hydraulics, sea level rise resilience, and landforms across the program area.
- Chapter 7, Site-specific Design Considerations. This section presents the elements to consider for restoring specific sites within the program area. It discusses the restoration targets for different habitat types and how to implement restoration actions with multiple benefits and project phasing. It also discusses challenges associated with soil contamination, permitting, water quality and public access.
- Chapter 8, Refined Restoration Designs. This section discusses all of the areas within the program and provides references for where to find information about the different planning efforts. It focuses most on the near-term projects and presents a refined restoration plan for the South LCWA site and provides more insight into the culvert alternative for the Central Area. out the long-term phase.
- Chapter 9, Implementation Guidance. This section provides details for how to implement a restoration project in LCW and uses the South LCWA site as the example. It discusses adaptive management/restoration practices, soils, revegetation strategies, final grading, ecosystem monitoring, and on-site species/habitat mitigation.
- Chapter 10, Next Steps. This section discusses the next phase of project level planning at the South LCW site and presents the steps to filling data gaps, designing public access elements, and permitting. It also provides a tentative timeline for this next level of planning in the South LCWA site.
- Chapter 11, Literature Cited. This section presents all of the references for the citations provided in the previous chapters.

**BACKGROUND:** On January 7, 2021 the LCWA certified the Final PEIR prepared for the Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Plan and adopted the Findings and Facts, Statement of Overriding Considerations, and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. The final task associated with this planning process was to develop a habitat restoration plan that conforms to the analyses presented in the PEIR.

A draft of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Habitat Restoration Plan (Plan) was circulated for public review from March 1, 2021 – March 25, 2021. As part of this review process the LCWA hosted a public meeting via Zoom on March 18, 2021 during which the contents of the Plan were presented and a question and answer session was held. Furthermore, the Plan was also circulated to the LCWA's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) on February 8, 2021. The LCWA's TAC is a consortium of regulatory, permitting, and partner agencies who have historically advised on the LCWA's restoration planning efforts. This committee met on April 12, 2021, to discuss the TAC's comments on the Plan.

A total of 8 comment letters were received from the Public and TAC including 2 letters from local tribal groups. The LCWA identified 91 individual comments on the content of the Restoration Plan within these letters. A matrix was developed in order to respond to these comments and direct edits to the draft Restoration Plan. The final Plan reflects responses to these comments which included making revisions to clarify sections regarding cultural resources, existing and potential biological resources, the planning process, special status species and plant communities, oil operations, public access, interpretive elements, restoration strategies, next phases of planning, and the timeline.

**FISCAL:** Adoption of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Habitat Restoration Plan will not incur any cost for the LCWA. Future phases of implementation of the Plan will require additional funding for restoration design planning, environmental compliance, public outreach, and construction.

July 1, 2021 – Item 12

RESOLUTION 2021 – 11

RESOLUTION OF THE LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS AUTHORITY  
ADOPTING THE LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS  
HABITAT RESTORATION PLAN

WHEREAS, the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority (LCWA) has been established between the Coastal Conservancy, the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, the City of Seal Beach and the City of Long Beach to facilitate the acquisition, protection, conservation, restoration, maintenance and operation and environmental enhancement of the Los Cerritos Wetlands; and

WHEREAS, the LCWA has further been established to focus on projects which will provide open space, habitat restoration, and watershed improvement projects within the Los Cerritos Wetlands; and

WHEREAS, the Los Cerritos Wetlands Habitat Restoration Plan proposes a restoration program for the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex; and

WHEREAS, the proposed program identifies conceptual restoration designs for approximately 503 acres of land located on the border of Orange County and Los Angeles County in the cities of Seal Beach and Long Beach, to restore wetland, transition, and upland habitats throughout the program area; and

WHEREAS, a Program Environmental Impact Report was previously certified to act as a public document used by local regulators and the public in their review of the potential environmental impacts of proposed activities, alternatives, and mitigation measures that would minimize or avoid potential environmental effects, and may be used to evaluate a plan or program that has multiple components (projects and actions) or addresses a series of actions that are related; and

WHEREAS, the LCWA is the Lead Agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) responsible for preparing the Final Program Environmental Impact Report for the proposed program (Final PEIR); and

WHEREAS, the Los Cerritos Wetlands Habitat Restoration Plan provides more description for the implementation of near-term projects within the Program Area as contemplated in the Final PEIR, a copy of which is incorporated into this Resolution by this reference as if fully set forth herein; and

WHEREAS, implementation of the future restoration projects will require adoption of the Restoration Plan;

WHEREAS, this action is exempt from the environmental impact report requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); NOW

Therefore be it resolved, that the LCWA hereby:

1. FINDS that this action is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the LCWA.
2. FINDS that the actions contemplated by this resolution are exempt from the environmental impact report requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act.
3. FINDS that the Los Cerritos Wetlands Habitat Restoration Plan was presented to the LCWA Governing Board, and the LCWA Governing Board has reviewed and considered the information contained in the Plan.
4. FINDS that the Plan reflects the LCWA Governing Board's independent judgement and analysis.
5. ADOPTS the staff report dated July 1, 2021.
6. ADOPTS the Los Cerritos Wetlands Habitat Restoration Plan.

~ End of Resolution ~

Passed and Adopted by the Board of the LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS AUTHORITY  
On July 1, 2021

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LCWA Board Chair

ATTEST:

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David Edsall, Jr.  
Deputy Attorney General