

# LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM REPORT

## NOVEMBER 2023- JANUARY 2024

### Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority

## Executive Summary

From November 2023- January 2024, the Stewardship Program engaged a grand total of 254 volunteers who participated in community-based wetlands habitat restoration. The 508 hours worked by these volunteers contributed \$14,732 of in-kind services. These volunteers planted 469 plants and removed 150 pounds of invasive species thereby reducing the seed bank of noxious weeds and removed 260 pounds of trash and debris. The Stewardship Program team led 12 field trips for 368 grade school students from community centers located in disadvantaged communities. Additionally, the Conservation Corps of Long Beach assisted with preparing hundreds of holes for these community plantings.

## Habitat Restoration Events

Monthly Habitat Restoration events take place at Zedler Marsh, which is currently the only active restoration site throughout the Los Cerritos Wetlands. Volunteers can help with a plethora of activities from native plant installation, non-native plant removal, mulching, trash clean ups, propagating and more!

The LCWSP hosted three monthly habitat restoration events during this period on Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, and January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024. A total of 116 volunteers helped install 359 plants, remove over 150 pounds of nonnative vegetation, 260 pounds of debris and trash. All this help from the community resulted in 232 hours of volunteer work time contributing \$7,250 worth of in-kind services. These events are supported by funding from the OCCF Warne Fund.

## Special Events

The LCWSP hosted three additional habitat restoration events at Zedler Marsh during this period, November 2023- January 2024. Community and school groups regularly reach out to participate in special community-based habitat restoration events. The program hosted 3 classes taught by Dan Nigro from Long Beach City College. Two classes were hosted on November 29, 2023. The last class was hosted on December 7, 2023. In total, 110 salt marsh plants were installed at Zedler Marsh. 138 total volunteer hours were contributed with \$4,134 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 field trips for underserved schools. For these field trips the Land Trust provides a bus that picks up students from their schools and transports them to Zedler Marsh. At Zedler Marsh the LCWSP Environmental Educators offer an engaging and informative grade-based curriculum of ecological related activities where youth participate in hands-on learning focused on the Los Cerritos Wetlands and Zedler Marsh. Since November 2023, the LCWSP hosted twelve field trips which accommodated 368 Long Beach youth. These programs are sponsored by funding provided by the Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust.

## Nature Walks

*Raptor Ramble, Heron Hike, Zedler Marsh*

Each month the LCWLT hosts a land tour and rotates through the Raptor Ramble, Heron Hike, or Zedler Marsh. 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 Heron Hike was hosted in November 2023 where participants have the unique experience of exploring a freshwater marsh dominated by emergent vegetation which is an excellent habitat for herons.

December was at Raptor Ramble and is an important outreach campaign to share the upcoming Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands restoration project. In this hike, there is a high chance to see raptors soaring the sky such as red-tailed and red-shouldered hawks, Cooper's hawks, American kestrels, turkey vultures and an array of herons and egrets hunting in the marsh. The new Zedler Marsh tour was hosted in January 2024 in 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.

## Conservation Corps of Long Beach

The Conservation Corps of Long Beach (CCLB) dedicated ten workdays to habitat restoration activities in Zedler Marsh such as pre-digging over two hundred holes in areas with challenging soils for upcoming planting events. They also helped to spread mulch over degraded soils, maintain fencing, and fell dead palm trees.



FIGURE 1. Volunteers planting in the mulefat scrub



FIGURE 2. Dan Nigro's class planting salt marsh plugs





FIGURE 3. Heron Hike participants



FIGURE 4. Educational Programming- Magnifying Activity