

# LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM REPORT FEBRUARY 2024-APRIL 2024

## Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority

### Executive Summary

From February 2024 - April 2024, the Stewardship Program engaged a grand total of 153 volunteers who participated in community-based habitat restoration programs. The 356 hours worked by these volunteers contributed \$11,125 of in-kind services. These volunteers planted 318 plants and removed 650 pounds of invasive plants thereby reducing the seed bank of noxious weeds. Additionally, they removed 200 pounds of trash and debris. The Stewardship Program, in partnership with the LCW Land Trust and AES, hosted 3 field trips for 90 students from Title 1 Elementary schools in LBUSD. Additionally, the Conservation Corps of Long Beach assisted with sanding and staining Zedler Marsh's picnic tables and benches to better accommodate stewardship program participants. The LCWSP Flyer for the months of June-December 2024 will be released this month.

### 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 two monthly habitat restoration events during this period on Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> and April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The February monthly habitat restoration event was not held due to rainy conditions. The plants benefitted from the rain. A total of 85 volunteers helped install 247 plants, 100 pounds of debris and trash, and spread 500 pounds of mulch. All this help from the community resulted in 170 hours of volunteer work time contributing \$5,312.50 worth of in-kind services. These events are supported by funding from the OCCF Warne Fund.

### Special Events

Community and school groups regularly reach out to participate in special community-based habitat restoration events. The LCWSP hosted three additional community-based habitat restoration events at Zedler Marsh during this period, Make a Difference Day on March 17, 2024, POLAHS service-learning trip on April 2, 2024 and Aquarium of the Pacific Earth Day on April 19, 2024. In total, 93 alkali meadow plants were installed at Zedler Marsh, 100 pounds of trash and debris, and 650 pounds nonnative species were removed. A total of 196 volunteer hours were contributed with \$6,125 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 February 2024, the LCWSP hosted three field trips which accommodated about 90 Long Beach youth. These field trips are sponsored by the Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust with funding provided by AES.

## 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 originally scheduled for February was closed due to rainy conditions. The Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands was beautiful after the rains. The Heron Hike was hosted in March 2024 where 21 participants have the unique experience of exploring a freshwater marsh dominated by emergent vegetation which is an excellent habitat for herons.

After over 12 years of showcasing the Pacific Green Sea Turtles, the Stewardship Program retired the Turtle Trek land tour. A new tour called the “Salt Marsh Stroll” was created and the first one was hosted in January 2024 and the second one was hosted for 20 participants in April 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 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 twelve 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 skilled team available to accomplish priority tasks such as trail repair, spreading mulch over degraded soils, maintain fencing, and sanding and painting tables used for education. The CCLB team is very versatile in that they can assist with sensitive plant communities installing plants and can take on laborious tasks such as removing tons of asphalt and wielding power tools to complete the job at hand.



FIGURE 1. Zedler Marsh after the rainstorm in February



FIGURE 2. SLCW After a Trash Clean-up in March 2024



FIGURE 3. 21 High School volunteers after a trash clean-up in March 2024



FIGURE 4. Trash collected from the March 2024 clean-up



FIGURE 5. POLAHS AP Environmental Science Class on April 2, 2024



FIGURE 6. Nature Walk- Salt Marsh Stroll on April 6, 2024



FIGURE 7. AOP Earth Day Event on April 19, 2024



FIGURE 8. AOP Earth Day Event on April 19, 2024