

LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM REPORT: FEBRUARY 2025-APRIL 2025

Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority

Executive Summary

From February 2025- April 2025, the Stewardship Program engaged a total of 191 volunteers who participated in community-based habitat restoration programs. The 382 hours worked by these volunteers contributed \$13,289.78 of in-kind services. These volunteers spread 500 pounds of mulch, helping to retain moisture in the soil, adding organics, and suppressing weeds, planted over a hundred and fifty plants, removed 270 pounds of weeds and removed 150 pounds of trash. The Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewardship Program (LCWSP), in partnership with the Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust and Applied Energy Services (AES), hosted 16 field trips for students. Additionally, the Conservation Corps of Long Beach assisted with caring for native plants at Zedler Marsh.

Monthly Habitat Restoration Events

Monthly Habitat Restoration events take place at Zedler Marsh every 1st 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 Feb 1st, Mar 1st and April 5th 2025 (Figure 1 and 2). A total of 152 volunteers helped remove 169 pounds of trash, spread 1,200 pounds of mulch and removed 160 pounds of weeds. All this help from the community resulted in 304 hours of volunteer work time contributing \$10,576.16 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, Being the Church held on February 2, 2025 (Figure 3), and Aquarium of the Pacific's Earth Day was on April 18th (Figure 4). In total, 150 pounds of trash and 110 pounds of weeds were removed. A total of 39 volunteer hours were contributed with \$2,713.62 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 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 February 2025, the LCWSP hosted sixteen field trips which accommodated about 458 Long Beach youth. Since AES funding started in 2023, this program has served 2,997 students. These field trips are sponsored by the Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust (Figure 5).

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 February 2025, where 30 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.

The Salt Marsh Stroll which tours Zedler Marsh was hosted for 38 participants in March 2025. This 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 the alkali meadow, coastal scrub, mulefat scrub, and other upland plant communities.

The Heron Hike which tours the Central Los Cerritos Wetlands was offered in April 2025, where 15 participants explored the freshwater marsh with many wading birds. This hike crosses the San Gabriel River and features a part of the Los Cerritos Wetlands that needs to be restored in the future.

Youth Workforce Development

During this quarter, the Conservation Corps of Long Beach (CCLB) dedicated seventeen workdays to habitat restoration activities in Zedler Marsh and Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands to help expand the impact of the stewardship team (Figure 6). CCLB has allowed the LCW Stewardship Program to work efficiently with a larger field team to accomplish priority tasks such as trail repair in the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands, spreading mulch over degraded soils, maintaining 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.

Stewardship Initiatives

This quarter, with the support of AES funding, Tidal Influence is planning the transition to include Southern LCW bluffs as a community habitat restoration project site. The LCWA nursery will be further improved with a new frame to replace the old structure, black cloth secured around the side to act as a wind wall, and more steel nursery tabletops that provide drainage for upland plants.



FIGURE 1. Habitat Restoration 1st Saturday group- 2.01.25



FIGURE 2. Habitat Restoration- 90 volunteers on 1st Saturday 3.01.25



FIGURE 3. Being the Church- trash clean-up- 18 volunteers 2.2.25



FIGURE 4. Aquarium of the Pacific Earth Day- 21 volunteers 4.18.25



FIGURE 5. A 4th Grade Class using Nature Journals March 2025



FIGURE 6. CCLB adding organics and mulch to willows at Zedler Marsh