

Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority

Date: September 29, 2025

To: Governing Board Members

From: Mark Stanley, Executive Officer

Subject: Item 8: Consideration of a resolution authorizing the Executive Officer to approve expenditures for construction of the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration.

Recommendation:

That the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority (LCWA) authorizes the Executive Officer to approve expenditures for construction for the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration for an amount not to exceed \$21,555,000.

Project Description:

Exhibit A: Project Location Exhibit B: Construction Budget

The Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Project (SLCWRP) aims to restore historic habitat at the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands site, which is part of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex that formerly spanned approximately 2,400 acres. Primary funding for this project is provided by the State Coastal Conservancy and the Ocean Protection Council.

The SLCWRP is located in the southernmost portion of the approximately 500-acre Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex. The property is currently accessible from the Pacific Coast Highway via 1st Street which extends through the property and leads to the neighboring oil operations and is subject to several easements for other landowners and utilities.

The site is only accessible during public programming or with prior approval. The Project Area includes 100-acres of property owned by the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority (LCWA) and a 3.5-acre parcel owned by the California State Lands Commission that the LCWA has a long-term non-exclusive lease to manage. The Project will be implemented in two phases, with approximately 50 acres to be restored during each phase.

The SLCWRP is located near two major waterways, the San Gabriel River, and the Haynes Cooling Channel. Within the Project Area, a remnant historic tidal channel, called the Hellman Channel, conveys seawater from the San Gabriel River. The site contains a large remnant building foundation, multiple former sumps and contaminated

areas from prior oil operations, landfills, relict coastal salt marsh, degraded uplands, and numerous non-native trees.

Phase 1 of the restoration will enhance existing salt marsh habitat, grade new sinuous tidal channels, create intertidal habitat, and increase tidal flux by cleaning the inlet culvert and replacing a secondary culvert with a box bridge. The SLCWRP will also incorporate several features requested by the Tribal Advisory Group, including harvest gardens, a gathering place, and a monument.

Construction Budget:

SLCWRP has entered the construction phase following near completion of planning, design, and permitting. A conservative estimate for the construction budget totals \$21,555,000, as identified under Task 4 in the project budget. This construction allocation has been further broken into eight subtasks, summarized but not limited to the following:

- 4.1 – Site Preparation & Demolition: Removal and clearing of all unnecessary infrastructure including power poles, mobilization of construction crews, clearing and grubbing approximately 17 acres of the site.
- 4.2 – Earthwork - Clean Soils: Filling of channels, cutting of channels, hauling, and stockpiling of channel material, cutting of subtidal basin, haul and stockpile of basin material.
- 4.3 – Earthwork - Contaminated Soils: Hauling of sump material to a landfill, soil testing and reporting to ensure the site has been properly remediated to permit standards. Soil amendments will be added to backfill sumps.
- 4.4 – Utilities & Easement Improvements: Mill existing road, asphalt removal, excavate road base, haul roadway material, compaction of new fill, final grade of road base material, pouring and finishing asphalt layer, installation of new pre-fabricated bridge, relocation of electrical and telecom utilities by the utility owner, 18-inch municipal water main line re-routing, cleaning of existing 42 inch culvert and installation of property fence lines.
- 4.5 – Public Access Improvements: Installation of access paths, installation of gates and fence lines, installation of tribal access features, implementation of tribal access plan, installation/creation of interpretive signage.
- 4.6 – Revegetation: Planting, irrigation point of connection, irrigation pump, irrigation installation, topsoil preparation, 1 year landscape warranty.

- 4.7 – Revegetation Establishment: Replacement of dead vegetation and broken irrigation parts for a two-year establishment period following the one-year landscape warranty.
- 4.8 – Construction Contingency: Funding in the event of unforeseen circumstance.

Construction of a large-scale wetland restoration project is inherently complex and subject to unforeseen conditions and evolving needs during implementation. While the overall construction budget of \$21,555,000 is a conservative estimate, flexibility within the amount is needed to distribute funds across the subtasks (4.1–4.8) as work progresses. For example, unforeseen site conditions may require additional funding for earthwork, while efficiencies in utilities or demolition may reduce costs in other areas.

The proposed resolution would authorize the Executive Officer to approve expenditures within the total construction allocation, shifting funds among subtasks as necessary to respond to changing field conditions, contractor needs, or adaptive management considerations. This authority will ensure timely progress while maintaining strict adherence to the overall construction budget.

All funds will remain restricted to construction-related expenditures under Tasks 4.1 through 4.8. No expenditures beyond this construction allocation would be authorized under this action without LCWA Governing Board approval.

Included in the estimate is a range for cost associated with undergrounding utilities. Southern California Edison is in the process of developing plans to underground the existing utility poles installed parallel to 1st Street. Crown Castle Communications, a telecommunications company that also operates infrastructure on these poles, will need to develop similar plans for undergrounding once Edison's preliminary designs are received. Their total costs for developing and implementing these plans, and associated administrative costs for easement modification, have yet to be provided by Edison or Crown Castle, but could range between \$2 to \$5 million dollars. The LCWA will be responsible for covering the costs incurred by the utility owners to move their infrastructure.

On July 23, 2025, the LCWA released a Request for Proposals for General Contractor Services for the project. Bid item four (4) of the RFP's Price Proposal, represented an allowance for unforeseen conditions that was not to be included in the base bid price total for utility undergrounding. Bidders were instructed that the allowance would be determined by the Authority. This allowance was included to allow fair and competitive bidding as the Authority worked to determine the likely and ultimate cost of utility undergrounding. The action considered by this board resolution will allow the Executive

Officer to apply the allowance to the General Contractor's base bid total once these figures have been resolved, in addition to a set aside contingency.

The LCWA does not yet have an agreement with a contractor to perform the installation of the public access improvement or landscape work. LCWA staff and consultants are actively value engineering these features to ensure the work can be accomplished within the LCWA's construction budget as recommended.

Background:

On August 11, 2015, the LCWA adopted the Conceptual Restoration Plan (CRP), which outlined a long-term vision for restoring and managing the Los Cerritos Wetlands to improve habitat, tidal exchange, public access, and flood protection. The CRP served as the foundation for advancing restoration planning and identified phased opportunities to implement projects over time. On January 8, 2021, the LCWA certified a Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) in 2021 pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The PEIR evaluated the potential environmental effects of the overall restoration program at a programmatic level, providing a broad environmental analysis to guide future site-specific projects while allowing flexibility in implementation. As part of this phased approach, the LCWA prepared and adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) in June 2023 for the Southern Area Restoration Project. The MND provided a project-level CEQA analysis focused on the initial restoration activities within the southern portion of the wetlands, incorporating mitigation measures to reduce potential environmental impacts to less than significant levels and allowing the project to move forward into implementation.

To date, all but one permit has been approved for construction. The one permit pending approval is the Seal Beach Grading permit. A list of all permits required are as follows:

1. California Coastal Commission: Coastal Development Permit
2. California Department of Fish and Wildlife: Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement
3. California Department of Fish and Wildlife: Restoration Management Plan
4. US Army Corps of Engineers: Nationwide 27
5. Regional Water Quality Control Board: 401 Certification
6. Seal Beach Grading Permit

Fiscal Impact:

On September 14, 2023, the State Coastal Conservancy Governing Board approved a grant award of up to \$31,852,000 for the SLCWRP (Resolution 2023-05). The funding was awarded to conduct additional planning and permitting for restoration, as well as

construction of Phase 1 which is inclusive of 54 acres of site. Shortly thereafter on November 2, 2023, the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) awarded a \$6,000,000 grant that offset the funding award from SCC by that amount (Resolution 2023-06).

To date the LCWA has awarded the following contracts for the SLCWRP as funded by the most recently awarded grants:

Consultant	Contract	Task	Amount
Moffat & Nichol	LCWA 23503	Design/Engineering	\$1,551,900.00
Hans Bauman Landscape Architecture	LCWA 23506	On-Call Graphic Design	\$20,000
Tidal Influence	LCWA 23504	Project Management	\$765,050
Tidal Influence	LCWA 23505	Ecological Compliance, Monitoring, Public Outreach	\$1,734,930
SYRUSA Engineering	LCWA 23517	Construction Management	\$779,792
Cogstone Resource Management	LCWA 23511	Tribal, Archeological, Paleontological Monitoring	\$411,485
Total:			\$3,711,257

The conservative estimate of \$21,555,000 represents a not-to-exceed amount. Should unforeseen elements of the project arise that exceed the approved budget, staff will present these items to the LCWA Governing Board for discussion and guidance to facilitate optimal decision-making.

Exhibit A: Project Location



Exhibit B: Project Budget

Task Number	Task Title		SCC Grant	OPC	AES	Required Grantee Match (\$0)	Total Budget
1	Project Management		\$ 570,000.00	\$ 200,000.00			\$ 770,000.00
2	Design & Permitting		\$ 200,000.00	\$ 800,000.00	\$ 390,000.00		\$ 1,390,000.00
3	Community Outreach and Engagement (Tribal, Public, Technical)		\$ 220,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 20,000.00		\$ 440,000.00
4	Construction		\$ 16,755,000.00	\$ 4,800,000.00			\$ 21,555,000.00
4.1	Construction- Site Prep and Demolition	\$ 1,500,000.00					\$ 1,500,000.00
4.2	Construction- Earthwork Clean Soils	\$ 5,000,000.00					\$ 5,000,000.00
4.3	Construction – Earthwork Contaminated Soils	\$ 5,730,000.00					\$ 5,730,000.00
4.4	Construction – Utilities and Easement Improvements	\$ 2,675,000.00					\$ 2,675,000.00
4.5	Construction – Public Access Improvements	\$ 890,000.00					\$ 890,000.00
4.6	Construction – Revegetation	\$ 2,000,000.00					\$ 2,000,000.00
4.7	Revegetation Establishment Period	\$ 560,000.00					\$ 560,000.00
4.8	Construction Contingency	\$ 3,200,000.00					\$ 3,200,000.00
5	Construction Management		\$ 1,640,000.00				\$ 1,638,000.00
6	Environmental Compliance		\$ 1,350,000.00				\$ 1,350,000.00
7.1	Pre-construction Ecological Monitoring		\$ 1,000,000.00				\$ 1,000,000.00
7.2	Post-construction Ecological Monitoring		\$ 1,680,000.00				\$ 1,680,000.00
8	Wetlands Management		\$ 2,000,000.00				\$ 2,000,000.00
9	Indirect Costs (20%)		\$ 437,000.00		\$ 30,000.00		\$ 467,000.00
	Total		\$ 25,850,000.00	\$ 6,000,000.00	\$ 440,000.00	\$ -	\$ 32,292,000.00

Item 8

RESOLUTION 2025-06

THAT THE LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS AUTHORITY (LCWA)
AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO APPROVE
EXPENDITURES FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE SOUTHERN
LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS RESTORATION

WHEREAS, the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority (Authority) 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 an 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, on November 2, 2023 the LCWA accepted grants totaling \$31,852,000 from the State Coastal Conservancy and Ocean Protection Council for Phase 1 of the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Project (SLCWRP); and

WHEREAS, construction will include site preparation and demolition, earthwork of clean soils, earthwork of contaminated soils, utilities and easement improvements, public access improvements, revegetation, a revegetation establishment period, and construction contingencies; and

WHEREAS, during the design phase the LCWA has completed 65 percent, 90 percent, and 100 percent design drawings, conducted extensive public outreach, and tribal consultation for the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Project, and is now ready to enter its construction phase; and

WHEREAS, construction of a large-scale wetland restoration project is inherently complex and subject to unforeseen conditions and evolving needs during implementation, and flexibility is needed to distribute funds across construction subtasks as work progresses; and

WHEREAS, there are remaining cost uncertainties as the project enters construction, including total costs for developing and implementing utility undergrounding plans, and associated administrative costs for easement modifications, yet to be provided by utility providers; as well as a general contractor allowance bid item and contingency; NOW

Therefore be it resolved, that the LCWA hereby:

1. FINDS that the actions contemplated by this resolution are exempt from the environmental impact report requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act.
2. FINDS that this action is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the LCWA.

3. ADOPTS the staff report dated September 29, 2025.
4. AUTHORIZES the Executive Officer to authorize grant funded expenditures for construction tasks for the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Project for a combined total not to exceed \$21,555,000.
5. AUTHORIZES the Executive Officer to enter and amend contracts for construction tasks for the SLCWRP for a combined total not to exceed \$21,555,000.
6. AUTHORIZES the Executive Officer to reappropriate funds between construction tasks in the SLCWRP Budget

~ End of Resolution ~

Passed and Adopted by the Board of the LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS
AUTHORITY on September 29, 2025.

Motion _____ Second: _____

Ayes: _____ Nays: _____ Abstentions: _____

Kristina Duggan, Chair

ATTEST:

John Natalizio
Deputy Attorney General