

LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM REPORT: MAY 2025-SEPTEMBER 2025

Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority

Executive Summary

From May 2025- September 2025, the Stewardship Program engaged a total of 216 volunteers who participated in community-based habitat restoration programs. The 432 hours worked by these volunteers contributed \$15,029.28 of in-kind services. These volunteers spread 400 pounds of mulch, helping to retain moisture in the soil, adding organics, and suppressing weeds, propagated over a one thousand and six plants, removed 390 pounds of weeds and removed 169 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 23 field trips for students. Additionally, the Conservation Corps of Long Beach assisted 18 times during this period with land management and stewardship tasks such as assisting with site preparation, solarization of invasive ice plant at Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands, and salvaging plants for to be replanted during the restoration.

Monthly Habitat Restoration Events

Monthly Habitat Restoration events take place at Zedler Marsh every 1st Saturday of the month. Volunteers help with many 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 five monthly habitat restoration events during this period on May 3rd, June 7th, July 5th, August 2nd, and September 6th, 2025 (Figure 1 and 3-6). A total of 158 volunteers helped propagate 1,006 plants, remove 169 pounds of trash, spread 400 pounds of mulch and removed 205 pounds of weeds. All this help from the community resulted in 608 hours of volunteer work contributing \$10,993.64 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 three additional community-based habitat restoration events with Long Beach City College at Zedler Marsh during this period. Professor Nigro's Marine Biology Classes participated on May 14th and the Wildlife Biology Class came on May 27th (Figure 2). In total, 185 pounds of weeds were removed. A total of 116 volunteer hours were contributed with \$4,035.64 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

May 2025, the LCWSP hosted twenty-three school field trips which accommodated about 683 Long Beach youth. Through the BE Safe summer parks program, the Land Trust hosted four field trips. Since AES funding started in 2023, this program has served 3,680 students. These field trips are sponsored by the Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust (Figure 7 and 8).

Land Tours

Raptor Ramble, Heron Hike, Salt Marsh Stroll

From May through August the LCWLT seized the opportunity to host special Raptor Ramble tours before the upcoming habitat restoration for Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands where the Raptor Rambles are hosted. The restoration site will likely not be open to tours during construction. 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 tours to experience diverse wildlife encounters in the Los Cerritos Wetlands.

The Raptor Ramble was offered in May 2025 with 21 participants, June 2025 with 12 participants, July with 17 participants, and August with 23 participants who all experienced the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands and encountered wildlife, including several bird species while learning about the restoration design plans for the upcoming earthwork (Figure 9-11). This was an opportunity to also learn in great detail about the upcoming habitat restoration from restoration ecologists who are on the project team.

The Heron Hike which tours the Central Los Cerritos Wetlands was offered in September 2025, where 23 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) Ocean Corps dedicated eighteen workdays to habitat restoration activities in Zedler Marsh and Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands to help expand the impact of the stewardship team (Figure 12). CCLB has helped with some of the heavy lifting to support 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, weed whacking and clearing tasks for fire breaks and pre-construction preparation, spreading mulch over degraded soils, leading salt marsh plug procurement, assisting with propagation in the LCWA nursery, digging holes for planting, and removing nonnative plant species. The Ocean Corps team is very versatile and consistent and 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 transitioning to include Southern LCW bluffs as a community habitat restoration project site. Tidal Influence has begun treating an acre of invasive iceplant and is mobilizing for community restoration of the bluffs. The LCWA nursery was 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. The Stewardship Program is adjusting plant placement to optimize growing conditions.



FIGURE 1. May 3 Habitat Restoration Weeding Event



FIGURE 2. Habitat Restoration- Dan Nigro 5.27 volunteers



FIGURE 3. June 7th Nursery Care and Weeding Habitat Restoration Event



FIGURE 4. July 5th Nursery Plant Propagation Habitat Restoration Event



FIGURE 5. August 2nd Iceplant Removal Prep Habitat Restoration at Southern Area



FIGURE 6. September 6th Nursery Organization and mulching at Zedler Marsh



FIGURE 7. Stevenson Elementary Field Trip on June 4th



FIGURE 8. Nature tour for Holmes Elementary School Field Trip June 5th



FIGURE 9. May 3 Special Raptor Ramble



FIGURE 10. July 5th Special Raptor Ramble



FIGURE 11. August 2nd Special Raptor Ramble



FIGURE 12. CCLB Ocean Corps clearing fire zone on June 6th at Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands