

It is a great thing to see so many people who value the Los Cerritos Wetlands as both an important ecosystem and great community resource and want to protect it.

The LCWLT takes very seriously its mission of stewardship and advocacy of the Los Cerritos Wetlands and feel that it is our obligation to our members and to the public that we ensure as much information as possible about this land swap proposal be made widely available for comment and feedback.

We remain concerned that we don't have enough specific information about many critical parts of the deal.

For example the transfer of the property to the city, without an enforceable guarantee that the wetlands will not be developed or used for other purposes greatly concerns us. It may well be years before the state is in a position to acquire this parcel. In the meantime there could be new leadership in the city (or at the state level) that may not see these wetlands as the valuable resource that we know they are and perhaps instead see them as the easiest pathway for roads or other development. Perhaps a way to address this concern is for the City to put an immediate conservation easement on the land using a template provided by the Rivers and Mountain Conservancy.

I think we all agree that a wetlands delineation study is critical yet funding for that study has not been identified except that it might come from the LCWA. This is concerning given the severe budget restrictions that are hampering the LCWA from completing projects that have already been identified and funded. What sort of "back up" plan can we expect if the LCWA is unable to expeditiously fund this delineation study? What mechanism is in place to guarantee that the LCWA or Coastal Conservancy or Rivers and Mountains Conservancy will oversee the study and chose the company to conduct the study?

What is the basic timeline for drawing up the Surface Use Release and Grant of Easements Documents? You mention that those documents will be negotiated with the "contributory oversight" of the LCWA, State Coastal Conservancy and Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and that the city will ensure that "all parties are to be satisfied before the City completes the proposed swap" and that issues raised in the agreement will have to be addressed. What does 'addressed' mean exactly? If parties do not agree, how will the city be able to finalize this deal?

I want to make it very clear to the council and to the public that the LCWLT is excited about this potential to acquire and protect a critical portion of the wetlands and we thank Councilmember DeLong for bringing it forward. But it must be a good deal, with enforceable provisions that protect the wetlands from future exploitation and development, so that we are all not back here in a few years fighting a new threat to this important community resource.

Thank you so much for your time.

Elizabeth Lambe

Executive Director,

Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust