
Final Report of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Study Group



Table of Contents

Maps	2-4
Glossary of Terms	5-6
Study Group Timeline	7
Community Organizations Represented	8
Introduction	9
Part I: Executive Summary	10-12
Part II: Component Issues	13-21
<i>A. The Last Remaining Wetlands</i>	<i>13-15</i>
<i>B. Environmental Issues</i>	<i>15-16</i>
<i>C. Traffic Concerns</i>	<i>16-19</i>
<i>D. Land Use</i>	<i>19-21</i>
Part III: Recommendations from Community Organizations	22-38
<i>A. Alamitos Heights Improvement Association</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>B. Belmont Shores Mobile Estates</i>	<i>24-26</i>
<i>C. Bixby Village Homeowners' Association</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>D. College Estates Homeowners' Association</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>E. Island Village Homeowners' Association</i>	<i>29-31</i>
<i>F. Naples Improvement Association</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>G. Pacific Villas Homeowners' Association</i>	<i>33-34</i>
<i>H. Spinnaker Bay Homeowners' Association</i>	<i>35-36</i>
<i>I. University Park Estates Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>37-38</i>
Part IV: Past Meeting Minutes	39-104
Part V: Additional Commentary	105-113
<i>A. Minority Report</i>	<i>106-107</i>
<i>B. Rebuttal from Sam Smock, Pacific Villas HOA</i>	<i>108-109</i>
<i>C. Rebuttal from Sonia Pawluczyk, Alamitos Heights</i>	<i>110</i>
<i>D. Rebuttal from Mike Pugh, College Estates</i>	<i>111</i>
<i>E. Rebuttal from Tom Lockhart, Belmont Shores Mobile Estates</i>	<i>112</i>
<i>F. Chairman's Response to Minority Report</i>	<i>113</i>
Part VI: Important Unanswered Questions	114-115
Part VII: Media Reports	116

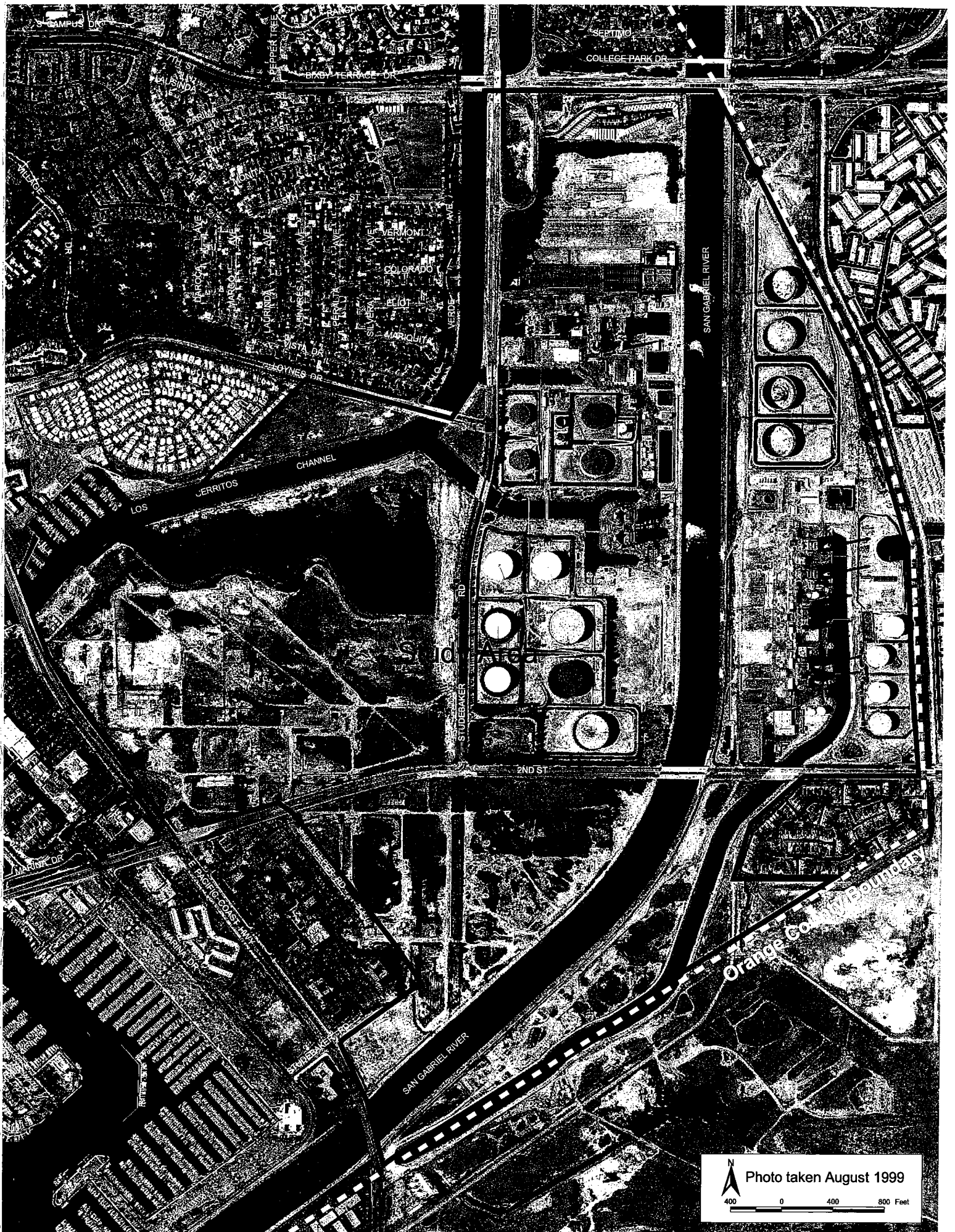
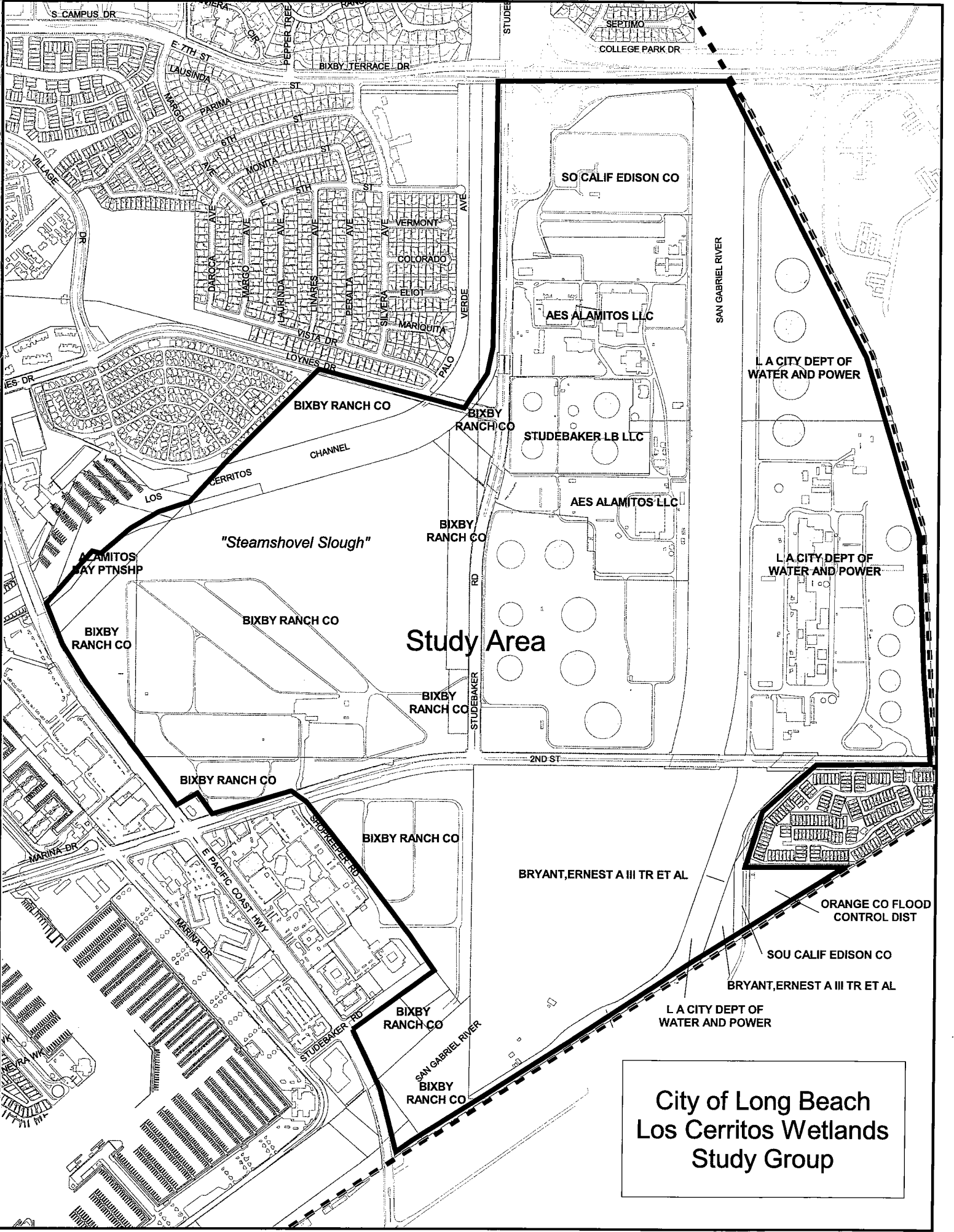
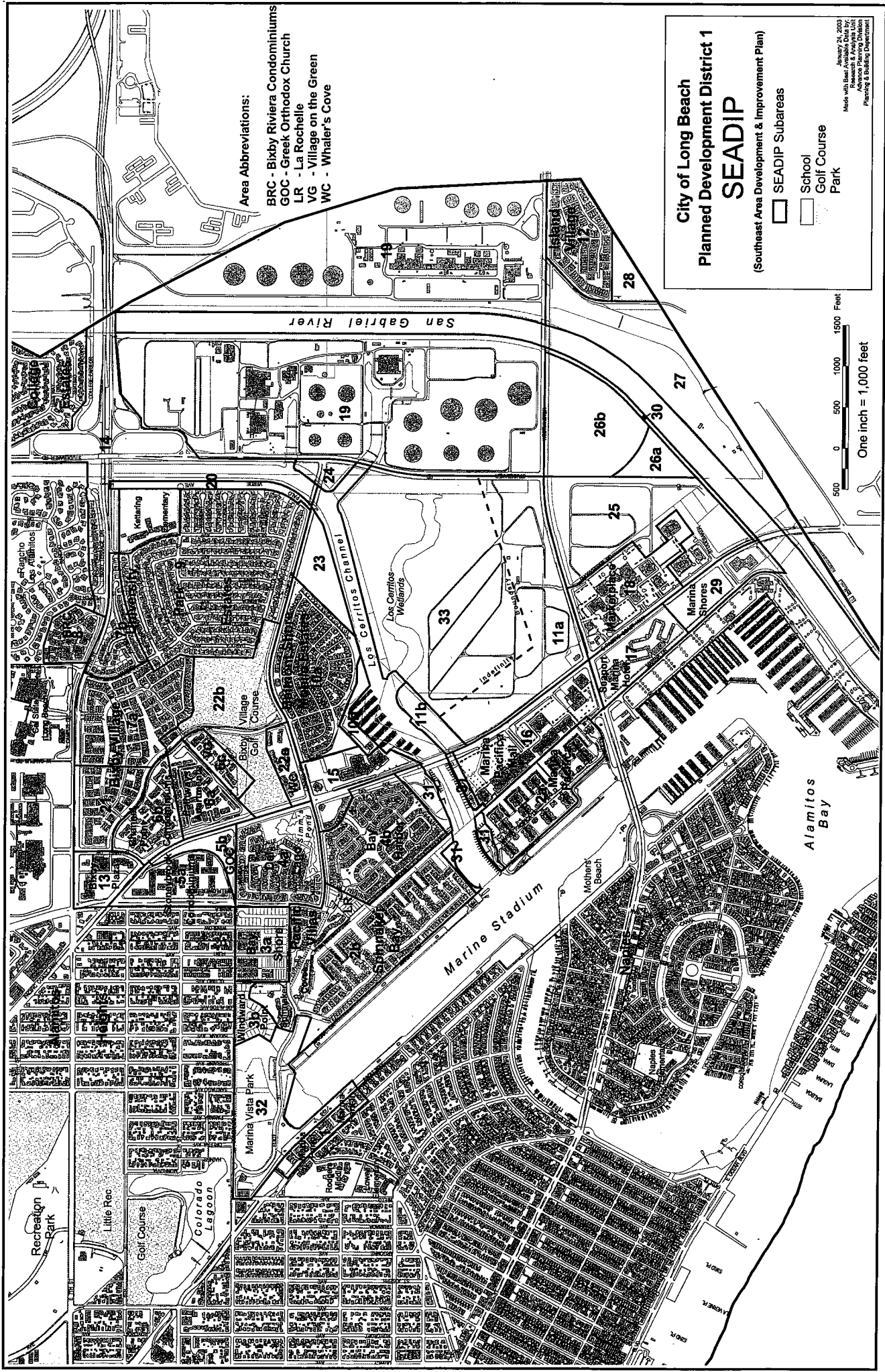


Photo taken August 1999
0 400 800 Feet



Study Area

**City of Long Beach
Los Cerritos Wetlands
Study Group**



Area Abbreviations:
 BRC - Bixby Riviera Condominiums
 GOC - Greek Orthodox Church
 LR - La Rochelle
 VG - Village on the Green
 WC - Whaler's Cove

City of Long Beach
Planned Development District 1
SEADIP
 (Southeast Area Development & Improvement Plan)

SEADIP Subareas
 School
 Golf Course
 Park

0 500 1000 1500 Feet
 One inch = 1,000 feet

January 21, 2003
 Made with Base Available Data by
 Research & Analysis Unit
 Planning & Building Department

Glossary of Terms

Albany Energy Systems (AES)—Power generating station located in City of Long Beach, which discharges into the San Gabriel River

Burn Dump—A closed, solid waste disposal site, where open burning has been conducted; the site boundary for a burn dump site is defined as the extent of contamination generated by burning and disposal activities or by subsequent spreading of contamination by natural processes (such as wind, rain, flooding and erosion) or human activities (such as grading and trenching). This boundary is not limited to the assessors parcel boundary on which the burning activities occurred or to the property owned by the entity, which operated the burn dump.

California Coastal Commission—Agency that works in partnership with coastal cities and counties to plan and regulate the use of land and water in the coastal zone. Development activities and activities that change the intensity of use of land or public access to coastal waters generally require a coastal permit from either this Commission or the local government

California Coastal Conservancy—State agency that uses entrepreneurial techniques to purchase, protect, restore and enhance coastal resources, and to provide access to the shore. The agency works in partnership with local governments, other public agencies, nonprofit organizations and private landowners

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)—California statute that requires the reduction of harmful environmental impacts of a project. The specific goals are for public agencies to (1) identify the significant environmental effects of their actions; and, either (2) avoid those significant environmental effects, where feasible; or (3) mitigate those significant environmental effects, where feasible

Commercial—Category of land uses characterized by the exchange of goods and services for financial and other consideration

Environmental Impact Report (EIR)—Detailed review of a proposed project, its potential adverse environmental effects, possible changes that can be made to reduce adverse effects, and possible alternatives

Hydric Soils—Soil that is saturated, flooded, or ponded during the growing season

Industrial—Category of land use comprised of those activities necessary to convert natural resources into finished products. These activities include all resource extracting, resource processing, manufacturing, assembling, storage, transshipping and wholesaling that precede the arrival of goods at a retail land use

Mitigation—Sustained action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people and property from natural hazards and their effects

Mitigation Credits—Used to quantify the value of a mitigation project. The amount of credits a land developer must earn in order to gain a permit for construction is determined by the ecological impact of the development plan

South East Area Development and Improvement Plan (SEADIP)—Sets specific development guidelines for the South East area of the City of Long Beach

Subsidence—The sinking of the land over man-made or natural underground voids. May occur abruptly or gradually over many years. Can also occur where underground water has dissolved subsurface materials or has been withdrawn by wells

Waste Dump—An area designated to receive solid wastes, such as municipal solid waste (household trash), construction debris, and sludge from sewage treatment and other processes

Wetlands—Areas where the frequent and prolonged presence of water at or near the soil surface drives the natural system meaning the kind of soils that form, the plants that grow, and the fish and/or wildlife communities that use the habitat. Please note that many important specific wetlands types have drier or more variable water systems than those familiar to the general public (i.e. swamps, marshes, and bogs).

Study Group Timeline

- *September 8, 2004*—Informal Meeting to discuss overview of study area, goals and objectives
- *October 13, 2004*—Chairman, Committee members and Alternates selected
- *November 2004*—Presentation by Dave Roseman, City Traffic Engineer about Study Area traffic issues
- *December 2004*—Presentation by Curtis Henderson, Department of Oil Properties about oil production issues in the Study Area
- *January 12, 2005*—Presentation by Kevin Green, SCS Engineers about environmental remediation
- *February 9, 2005*—Presentation by Mary Small, California State Coastal Conservancy about wetlands acquisition and restoration
- *March 9, 2005*—Presentation by Pam Emerson, California Coastal Commission about the CCC roles and requirements
- *April 13, 2005*—Presentation by Angela Reynolds, Community, Environmental, and Advanced Planning Officer and Marty Moreno, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
- *May 11, 2005*—Presentation by Marice White, Government Solutions providing an overview of the proposed Home Depot project at 400 Studebaker Road
- *July 13, 2005*—Presentation by Tanya Bonfiglio, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power about the upgrading projects at the Haynes Power Plant
- *August 10, 2005*—Presentation by Don May, Earth Corps about a wetlands restoration plan
- *September 14, 2005*—Group session to plan for upcoming Community Forum
- *October 5, 2005*—Community Forum held at Rogers Middle School
- *October 12, 2005*—Group discussion of public input, assignment of draft report, areas of responsibility established
- *November 9, 2005*—Presentation of member association letters regarding wetlands study area
- *November 30, 2005*—Final formal meeting; approval of draft report; final vote

Community Organizations Represented

Alamitos Heights Improvement Association

- Sonia Pawluczyk, *Committee Member*

Belmont Shores Mobile Estates

- Tom Lockhart, *Committee Member*
- Joan McGrath, *Alternate*

Bixby Village Community Association

- David Bauer, *Committee Member*
- John Becker, *Alternate*

College Estates Homeowners' Association

- Mike Pugh, *Committee Member*
- Ann Dennison, *Alternate*

Island Village Homeowners' Association

- Dave Bates, *Committee Member*
- Denis Craig, *Alternate*

Naples Improvement Association/Save Our Bay

- Ric Trent, *Chairman*

Pacific Villas Homeowners' Association

- Sam Smock, *Committee Member*
- Lisa Rinaldi, *Alternate*

Spinnaker Bay Homeowners' Association

- Hank Snapper, *Committee Member*

University Park Estates Neighborhood Association

- Janice Dahl, *Committee Member*
- Thomas Marchese, *Alternate*

Introduction

In the summer of 2004, Councilman Frank Colonna, asked a number of homeowners' groups and residents' associations to attend an exploratory meeting regarding the future of the Los Cerritos Wetlands and the surrounding area.

The driving force behind the desire to formalize community opinion was the announcement that a group of investors had put forth a plan to build a Home Depot on 16.1 acres of land at Studebaker and Loynes. The local residents openly protested and began a "Stop Home Depot" campaign.

Councilman Colonna, in an attempt to bring logic and civility back to a highly charged, emotional atmosphere, set the stage for a community based committee to explore the larger question of the general area and its future, not just the proposed Home Depot project.

The Los Cerritos Wetland Study Group (LCWSG) was formed and first met in August of 2004. A Chairman, Ric Trent, was elected and ground rules were established. Ten residents groups were represented on the Committee. The guiding premise of the group was, "We will avail ourselves of the experts in a number of different areas of consideration, and all be educated to the same FACTS at the same time." We decided that we would dedicate at least a year to the fact-finding, and at the end of the education period, we would issue our recommendation regarding the Study Area. Prior to the final report we intended to poll our various groups and associations regarding their opinions and attitudes about the future of the area under study. We also planned to hold a community input forum to allow anyone to come, and speak or write their opinion regarding the area.

This has been done and this report is the synoptic synthesis of all of those actions and efforts of the past fifteen months.

PART I: Executive Summary

After being educated by the experts, supported by Long Beach City Departments to answer our subsequent questions, and informed by residents and homeowners groups, one thing is patently clear... the taxpaying citizens of District 3 have a strong desire to preserve and restore the Los Cerritos Wetlands.

There are various opinions about how to go about this task and who or what will fund the acquisition and restoration. There are also numerous ideas regarding what extent and character the restoration should take. There is even some debate on the location, and definition of, the Wetlands themselves. But the one clear message is, that it is important that we act to ensure that the last approximately 2% of the Long Beach Wetland system will be preserved for posterity.

There are four pressing issues that need to be dealt with in order to start this process:

1. The Wetlands area is a mish-mash of zoning issues. Some of the land was incorporated into the City of Long Beach in the late 1990's. Some areas were certified by the California Coastal Commission and some were not. There needs to be a clarification and completion of the certification process along with a definitive explanation of where exactly the Wetlands boundaries are.
2. We have learned, during this process, that the study area has a long history as a waste dump for some very troubling and dangerous substances. Before any restoration of wetlands, or development around the wetlands there needs to be a definitive audit of where the bad stuff is, and what it is. Some of the chemicals that have been identified are reported to be cancer-causing pathogens. The City of Long Beach and others may face significant liability if any of these known dump sites are compromised by either a wetlands restoration effort or a development project.
3. The over-arching need is to clarify the possibilities for the whole study area. The LCWSG recommendation is that the SEADIP plan be revised and updated for the area of study. In order to accomplish this we recommend that the City Council direct the Planning Commission to establish an Ad Hoc Committee with all the support necessary to revise the South East Area Development and Improvement Plan.
4. The uniqueness of the study area adjacent lands has a number of commercial developers anxious to erect projects there. It is the recommendation of the LCWSG that a temporary moratorium be enacted

immediately for any and all projects in the Study Area. We further request that the Ad Hoc Committee recommend that heavy industrial development be banned in the Study Area. It doesn't require too vivid an imagination to see that the life-style and real estate value of the region is inconsistent with "heavy industrial" development. The future of Southeast Long Beach as a successful well functioning community and the future of the Study Area depends on a well thought out, fully integrated, over-view plan that takes all the pieces of this complex puzzle into consideration. If we allow hasty development of the Study Area, just for profit and some sales tax possibilities, we will pay the price of "piece-meal" development for generations. The LCWSG strongly recommends that a thorough master plan be completed before anything can be done that may harm the future opportunities of restoring the Los Cerritos Wetlands.

This report is divided into four subtopics: Wetlands, Environmental, Traffic, and Land Use. Each area has its own unique set of concerns and considerations.

1. **WETLANDS**—Preservation and restoration are important because the Los Cerritos Wetlands are
 - The last approximately 2% of surviving wetlands in Long Beach.
 - The last restorable estuary in Los Angeles County
 - A critical incubator for open ocean fish
 - A natural engine that cleanses and scrubs the pollution that comes with the environmentally unfriendly industry surrounding them
 - The habitat for a number of threatened wildlife and aquatic species
 - One of the only land uses that can, if healthy, begin to neutralize some of the toxins that have been historically dumped and buried in this area
2. **ENVIRONMENTAL**—Pollution, quality of life issues, and the natural environment all have immediate concerns
 - The Study Area is a true paradox. It is one of the most polluted areas in the city....yet it holds the last hope for Long Beach to purposely preserve an important and unique piece of our natural environment.
 - The development plans need to be put on hold so current levels of pollution and toxins can be measured and mitigation plans can be "built in" to future development
 - The major threat to the future of this area is uncoordinated development. Any scenario that may disturb or add to existing pollution or contamination, could make the Wetlands impossible to preserve and restore
3. **TRAFFIC**—Any action contributing to increased traffic in this area needs to be closely and seriously scrutinized.
 - The intersection of 2nd Street and PCH is the busiest intersection in Long Beach and one of the most traveled intersections in Los Angeles County.
 - Any future development needs to have its traffic impact assessed as a part of all other planned or asked for land use, and NOT as a stand alone project.

- The responsibility for the approximately 20 traffic lights in the area is divided between the City of Long Beach and CalTrans. The lights are not coordinated! This adds significant time to travel through the Study Area. A committee should be appointed immediately to solve that problem and create a successful plan to synchronize the lights.
 - There is considerable subsidence of Loynes Drive and lower Studebaker Avenue. Some parts of Loynes have six feet of asphalt added to the roadway to keep it drivable. NO heavy truck traffic should be allowed on either of these stretches of road until the sinking problem can be dealt with on a permanent basis.
 - Every attempt to mitigate the traffic load at the 2nd and PCH intersection should be studied thoroughly.
4. **LAND USE**—The Southeast Long Beach Residents are, with minor exception, greatly in favor of creating a MASTER PLAN for the land use aspect of the Study Area. Any change in the existing mix of businesses in the Study Area should be delayed until a Master Plan that includes an update of the current SEADIP plan can be created. It is much more likely that the funding necessary to acquire and restore the Los Cerritos Wetlands, can be successfully attracted, *if we have a Master Plan that clearly identifies the permitted land uses for the future of the Study Area.*

The successful culmination of the preservation of the Bolsa Chica Wetlands is a very positive model for what can be done at Los Cerritos. The Port of Long Beach recently gave the Bolsa Chica preservation group over \$10,000,000 for mitigation credits. We of the LCWSG couldn't help thinking that if a similar amount could be designated to the Los Cerritos Wetlands, those funds, along with a \$7,000,000 commitment from the State that is being held for Los Cerritos acquisition, could play a huge role in the acquisition and preservation of the area. Dr. Jerry Schubel, CEO of The Aquarium of the Pacific, has said,

“American citizens are finally waking up to the fact that the future is not set in concrete, it's what we are willing to make it.”

In the case of the Los Cerritos Wetlands we have the rare opportunity to take actions today that will reverberate for hundreds of years into the future. We, the committee members of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Study Group, sincerely hope that the legacy we have begun with these proceedings will be one that future generations will look back on with appreciation and approval for a job well done. We humbly ask your help that this be accomplished.

PART II: Component Issues

A. The Last Remaining Wetlands in Long Beach

- These are estuarial wetlands at the mouth of the San Gabriel River, which comprise the largest salt marsh and only restorable estuary in Los Angeles County.
- As defined by the California Coastal Commission and Dept. of Fish & Game, they meet the wetlands definition as having one of the following three criteria, **and in fact have all three**:
 - They are inundated.
 - There are hydric soils present.
 - There is wetland vegetation present.
- The wetlands properties in the Study Area are privately-owned by:
 - Bixby Ranch Co. ("Bixby property")
 - Ernest A. Bryant III Trust; et al. ("Bryant property")
- The California State Coastal Conservancy assists in getting funding to acquire wetlands, in wetlands recovery and in determining "priority lands". Mary Small of the Coastal Conservancy advised the study group that it considers Los Cerritos Wetlands a **priority**. At the time of her presentation, the study group was advised that the Hellman property¹ had the best chance of acquisition occurring soon. The Conservancy had also recently completed an appraisal of the Bryant property.
- The California Coastal Commission protects public access, natural resources, public views and controls development along the coast. Pam Emerson, senior supervising planner, advised the study group that the Coastal Commission has not certified the wetlands boundaries. Reason: this land was annexed to the City of Long Beach from the County of Los Angeles in 1997, 20 years after SEADIP was established. This also means that the City of Long Beach has not determined the wetlands boundaries, either. The Coastal Commission must review a wetland delineation study to make a determination of the boundaries.
- Don May of Earth Corps informed the study group of lost wetlands statistics: the U.S. has lost half of its wetlands; California has lost 95% of its wetlands; and Long Beach has lost approximately 98% of its wetlands.

¹ This is a third property that is contiguous to the Study Area located across the county line in Orange County. It is often included in these wetlands discussions. However, it is not within the Study Area boundaries.

- Wetlands are vitally important to humans for our survival, our quality of life and our economic benefit.
 - Survival—endangered habitat and the food chain:
 - The entire area is an endangered habitat, within which are endangered plant and animal species that are wetland-dependent and can live only in this habitat.
 - Wetlands are nurseries for fish that live in the ocean. Destroying these spawning areas will drastically impact the ocean fishery and our own food supply. (These wetlands are presently in a degraded state due to a history of burn dumps, oil operations and landfills, which have adversely affected the ocean fishery.)
 - The wetlands are biologically important as a mixing zone, where fresh water and salt water meet, and which supports a large diversity of plants and animals.
 - Wetlands serve as natural filters, cleansing pollution from incoming water.
 - Quality of life, contentment and peace of mind:
 - As the wetlands serve the food chain and provide habitat for plants and animals, they provide sorely needed open space, which is an antidote to crowding.
 - The wetlands connect us to the natural world and its beauty.
 - Open space, less crowding and a thriving ecological preserve foster contentment and peace of mind.
 - Economic benefit to the following industries:
 - The offshore sport fishing industry will rebound as a result of a renewed ocean fishery that is fed by the healthy wetlands.
 - Eco-tourism is the fastest-growing segment of the tourism industry. Within the eco-tourism industry, bird watching is the fastest growing segment. Wetlands are prime areas for bird watching and attract birders from all over the U.S. This will enhance the City's tourist industry.
- Restoration and preservation of the Los Cerritos Wetlands will require acquisition of the properties.
 - Possible purchasers of the properties are:
 - City of Long Beach
 - State of California
 - California State Coastal Conservancy
 - Army Corps of Engineers
 - Joint Powers Authority
- Restoration of the Los Cerritos Wetlands:
 - The Los Cerritos Wetlands is a scenic watershed, which is eligible for restoration funding. This can be accomplished through mitigation credits and mitigation banking.

- Restoration will require remediation of burn dumps, landfill and petroleum operations. Curtis Henderson, Dept. of Oil Production, City of Long Beach, informed the study group of the following costs:
 - \$50,000 to abandon an oil well.
 - \$100,000 to re-abandon an oil well.
 - \$1 million to move an oil well.
 - Pipelines are abandoned in place.
- The Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust has developed a conceptual restoration plan. Their estimate of the cost for all three phases of the restoration is \$75 million. Their plan can be viewed on their website at www.lcmlandtrust.org.
- The City's General Plan for the area was formed in 1977 and is called SEADIP, the Southeast Area Development and Improvement Plan. These wetlands were not a part of SEADIP because, at the time, they were unincorporated Los Angeles County land. They were subsequently annexed to the City in 1997. As a result, their boundaries are not certified by the California Coastal Commission, nor determined by the City.
 - SEADIP needs to be updated.
 - The wetlands boundaries need to be certified.

B. Environmental Issues

- Pollution
 - Air---there are nitrogen oxide, toxic organic compounds, and sulfuric oxide fallout from
 - The AES powerplant, the flight pattern for the Long Beach Airport, as well as pollution from the Los Angeles and Long Beach Harbors
 - Ground—on the wetlands, there are toxic dumps, burn dumps, sumps, oil wells, drilling, mud dumps, AES tanks and pipelines
 - Water—there are nitrates & other nutrients from wastewater treatment plant, stormwater runoff and nonpoint discharges, and very high nitrogen concentrates coming down the San Gabriel River
 - Light—significant light from the power plants
 - Contaminants
 - Flotsam—styrofoam and debris floating downriver, from the Los Cerritos Channel and in with the tides
 - Jetsam —contaminated sediments washed down the river and channel
 - Methane—Hydrogen Sulfate (H₂S) generated by oil production operations and wetlands peat decay
 - Petroleum—present operations and dumps of solvents, cleaners, degreasers, surfactants and other toxic organic compounds.

- Because of the pollution at sites such as these, the Felando Act was passed. It says that a building permit cannot be issued for residences or sensitive people within 1 mile of unremediated dump sites; or for industrial buildings within ½ mile of such sites
- Quality of Life
 - Health—obviously, the present, continuing contamination can have a negative effect on our health; however, wetland plants scrub toxicants and carcinogens from water and airshed. Fortunately, wetland plants can selectively concentrate them down so that they can be disposed of.
 - Recreation—people enjoy visits to the wetlands now, but sand scrubbed of contaminants could replenish starved beaches
 - Educational opportunities—it is important that children as well as adults come to learn of our historical civilizations as well as nature and ecology
- Natural Aspect
 - Biological Cycles—restoring a seawater inlet would restore the fishery cycles
 - Existing structures—removing the present levies (or at least putting big holes in them) on the San Gabriel River would enhance flood protection
 - River Restoration—before we can do this, we must restore the estuary
 - Power Plant Impacts—they have major impacts. Every living thing in the water is killed as it is sucked into the power plant for cooling purposes. The tide comes in and never goes out. The water is drawn from the estuary heated and is discharged into the San Gabriel River lifeless. In order to restore it, there needs to be another inlet from the sea. Surrounding communities experience
 - Noise levels sufficient to awaken neighbors
 - Vibrations sufficient to rattle walls, windows, and move pictures on the walls
 - Frequent increases in power plant ambient noise levelsExhaust gases and nuisance odors from the power plant operations are a continuing problem to local residents.
 - Hurricane Katrina has taught us the importance of wetlands for flood control from tropical storms and El Nino.

C. Traffic Concerns

- Dave Roseman, Traffic Engineer, City of Long Beach, spoke to the study group regarding: (1) traffic studies, (2) levels of service at intersections and (3) mitigation of traffic congestion:
 - Traffic studies take the following into consideration:
 - Trip generation: inbound and outbound trips from a particular facility. Examples given: (a) an average 2000-sq.-ft. home is

- anticipated to generate approximately 10 trips per day, with 1 trip during peak hours; (b) 2000 sq. ft. of general office space is anticipated to generate approximately 20 trips per day with 3 trips during peak hours; (c) 2000 sq. ft. of shopping center is anticipated to generate approximately 80 trips per day with 8 trips during evening peak hours.
- Trip distribution: direction of the trips: north, south, east, west.
- Traffic volume: analysis of a variety of traffic scenarios during weekday peak periods (worst-case scenarios), which include: (a) existing traffic conditions; (b) future traffic conditions without the proposed project; (c) future traffic conditions with the proposed project; (d) any proposed roadway improvements.
- Weekday peak periods: 7 a.m. – 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- Levels of service at intersections:
 - Every intersection in the city has a letter designation for its level of service: A, B, C, D, E, F. “A” is excellent (free flow) and “F” is failure (forced flow). “E” is considered capacity and is typically the peak-hour goal.
 - City of Long Beach wants all intersections at level D or better.
 - Any development which reduces the level of service by 2% for grades D and F is considered a significant factor.
 - Intersection at Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) and 2nd Street: (a) busiest intersection in the city and presently at peak capacity; (b) 60,000 cars a day travel through this intersection, with another 40,000 cars a day traveling on 2nd Street through Belmont Shore.
- Mitigation:
 - Existing conditions:
 - Bridges: the Study Area is like an island, connected to all main thoroughfares by bridges.
 - Signalized intersections:
 - Two entities control traffic lights at intersections: (a) City of Long Beach; (b) State Department of Transportation (CalTrans).
 - There are approximately 20 signalized intersections in the Study Area of which approximately one-half are under CalTrans control.
 - CalTrans controls all signals on PCH, 7th Street east of PCH and freeway ramps.
 - Coordination of traffic signal sequencing is problematic across jurisdictional boundaries and often prevents coordination of sequencing.

(E.g., CalTrans allows the intersection of PCH and 2nd Street to “run free” on the weekends.)

- Possible mitigation measures which would require significant infrastructure investment:
 - Widening bridges: prohibitively expensive.
 - Adding turn pockets at intersections, which is possible at some locations, but prohibited at intersections without requisite room to widen and still comply with lane width and shoulder requirements:
 - CalTrans has more stringent lane width requirements: 12 feet plus 8 feet of shoulder.
 - The City’s lane width requirement: 10 feet and no shoulder.
 - Roseman advised the study group that the City was pursuing a project with CalTrans to widen the southbound approach at PCH and 2nd Street.
 - Creating new roadway connections:
 - Possible when the land is available. Because of the extensive network of waterways, most new road construction has limited benefit without widening bridges or constructing new bridges.
 - Improving traffic signal sequencing:
 - Cross-jurisdictional cooperation is required.
 - Could create traffic problems at other intersections along the same roadway; e.g., the intersection at PCH and 7th Street.
- Pending and Proposed Development Projects:
 - Traffic impacts from all projects must be considered as a whole and not in a piecemeal or patchwork fashion.
 - To date, these projects are pending or proposed:
 - Home Depot Design Center located at Studebaker and Loynes
 - Seaport Marina Hotel conversion to mixed-use development by Lennar, located at southwest corner of PCH and 2nd Street
 - Marina Shores East, a proposed retail project located at the Pumpkin Patch/Christmas Tree Lot at PCH and Studebaker Road
 - Seal Beach Boeing Project located on Westminster Street between Boeing and Island Village

The totality of just the above could generate tens of thousands of additional vehicles per day on top of the current 60,000 vehicles that pass through the intersection of 2nd Street and Pacific Coast

Highway. The traffic impacts from all projects must be considered as a whole.

- Other Traffic Issues in the Study Area:
 - Loynes Drive—additional traffic on a dangerous road:
 - Built on a landfill. As a result, the earth beneath the road shifts continuously. It has been repaved and repaired many times, which helps to level the undulations that make driving this road like riding a roller coaster. The shifting of the earth will continue, as will the need for repairs and repaving.
 - Fatal accidents, major and minor accidents are a recurring problem on Loynes.
 - Lacks sidewalks and a bike path: dangerous for pedestrians and bicyclists.
 - Increased traffic from additional development raises the frequency of accidents on all roadways.
 - Increased traffic from additional development raises noise pollution and air pollution levels, which are unhealthy, particularly for those living in close proximity.

D. Land Use

The Study Area's boundaries enclose a myriad of historically disparate land uses. There are areas of industrial use, petroleum extraction, dedicated wetlands, potential wetlands areas, electrical generating stations, power plant cooling channels, empty tank farms, 'back-bay' portions of Los Alamitos Bay, the Los Cerritos Channel according to a Moffett-Nichols study and its environs, and some of the most heavily traveled vehicular roads in Los Angeles County.

Within the Study Area, there are known waste dump sites, some of which include hot, potentially carcinogenic deposits; these dump sites are a potential liability to both the City of Long Beach and future developers who may disturb the earth 'Cap' which covers these sites. There are also known earthquake fault lines that transect the area, particularly along some of the Study Area's major streets and roads. There are regions with severe subsidence problems, particularly along Loynes Drive and Studebaker Road. Both roads have sections wherein pronounced subsidence is a continuing maintenance problem and occasions unsafe driving conditions. No heavy vehicle use should be permitted unless and until the subsidence problems are solved.

Traffic congestion problems within the Study Area and surrounding neighborhoods are, at peak travel times, well beyond the passive description of 'congested'. As an example, east-west travel on 2nd Street, through the intersection of PCH is one of the regions most heavily used intersections, and experience yields 9 to 14 minute transit times to move 1-1/4 miles during peak travel times. A further traffic flow limit, in and around the Study Area, is the fact that the Study Area, and its adjacent areas, are restricted by the bridges which carry the area's traffic. The Study Area is essentially, a series of virtual islands,

which can only be reached by way of the bridges that join them. These bridges are absolute traffic restrictors. There are no known plans to expand their traffic carrying capacities.

Portions of the Study Area were not annexed by the City of Long Beach until late in the 1990's, yielding areas which are 'Non-Certified' by the California Coastal Commission and an aged SEADIP Plan which needs to be completely redone to address today's facts, quality of life challenges, and development limitations.

The Community of 'Stakeholders' involved in this study, endorse the notion of Wetlands Restoration and Wetlands Expansion. Wetlands and their expansion/restoration represent a unique opportunity and, to the greatest extent possible, should be pursued by the City of Long Beach. Serious discussions by the Study Group took place suggesting that there should be major funding from the Port of Long Beach to pay for purchase, expansion, restoration, and remediation issues for the wetlands within the Study Area. Port monies in the millions of dollars in mitigation credits have been used in such places as Bolsa Chica Wetlands. The need to spend Port of Long Beach mitigation monies closer-to-home is strongly recommended by Stakeholders.

On November 14, 2005, the L.A. Times reported that the Federal Environmental Protection Agency declared:

"The Greater Los Angeles region is again home to the worst smog in the nation....

"Despite the improvements, air quality officials and environmentalists are quick to note that the seemingly mundane act of breathing continues to pose a serious health hazard in many parts of Southern California.

Though regulators have begun to get a handle on smog-forming pollution, research increasingly indicates that airborne particle pollution, especially soot from burning diesel fuel, may pose a greater risk. A study by the South Coast air district concluded that diesel soot accounted for 70% of the cancer risk from air pollution in the region.

The ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, and the rail yards that help move goods from the ports, are the largest source of diesel soot in the region. Reducing port pollution has become a major focus for state and local activists and lawmakers."

Any further development within the Study Area should be held in abeyance during a formal moratorium period, until such time as a thoroughly revised land usage study and a new adopted plan are adopted for the Study Area. Any permitted development should by design, limit development within the Study Area to uses that minimize new traffic increases resulting that results from new

development. Further, future land uses should eliminate heavy vehicular traffic over roads that already have unsafe subsidence problems.

Remediation funds for Study Area wetlands out to be demanded from the Ports and, in every case of future development within the Study Area, developers should be assessed mitigation fees on some proportional basis sufficient to assist with securing the funds needed for purchase, restoration, and expansion of the wetlands. Creating a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) charged with securing such funding is strongly recommended. All Local, State, and Federal funding sources should be vigorously pursued towards this goal.

The Stakeholders are strongly opposed to any commercial type of development, which always yields substantially more vehicular traffic than other, less traffic intensive land uses. We need to focus on Quality of Life as the primary consideration for future development of the Study Area.

The Study Area's future development provides a unique opportunity to create new urban landscapes—landscapes that embrace the restoration of our wetlands; landscapes that provide much needed recreational space such as hiking and biking trails; and landscapes that encourage Eco-Tourism. **Only compatible, low impact, future development should be permitted within the Study Area, and no development should be permitted in the wetlands.**

The impact of present and proposed developments outside of the Study Area that may directly affect the Study Area *must* be included in this land use evaluation. **To achieve these goals a master land use plan for the Study Area that places optimum quality of life as its essence, is essential.**

PART III: Recommendations of Community Organizations

Alamitos Heights Improvement Association

Our association wants to thank Councilman Frank Colonna for the opportunity to participate in the Los Cerritos Wetlands Study Group.

Our main concern is TRAFFIC.

We are concerned especially with the traffic on 7th Street, Pacific Coast Highway and Bellflower Blvd. as well as Colorado Street. We are alarmed about the increasing volume of vehicles in our neighborhood when the volume of traffic is high on the main arteries. In these times we experience higher volume of vehicles and faster speed inside our neighborhood. We have joggers, people using bicycles and children on their skateboards using and enjoying our streets from the early hours of the day into the late evening, The increased traffic is making these activities very unsafe at times. More traffic brings more noise, more pollution and the probability of accidents increases.

We are aware that at the present time there are several projects for developing land in the area around the wetlands. These projects are being independently considered. Every one of these projects will bring more congestion to the areas surrounding our neighborhood and the lack of plans for mitigation do not appear to resolve the problem.

Our Association is not opposing to developments but supports a "Master Plan" for the development of the area surrounding Los Cerritos Wetlands and recommends taking into consideration ALL the different projects in this area before any new development are approved. Only that will maintain the quality of life that all of us like to enjoy without stopping progress.

Our Association also supports the preservation and restoration or the Wetlands.

Sonia Pawluczyk,
Alamitos Heights Improvement Association
Board of Directors

Belmont Shores Mobile Estates Homeowners Association

Belmont Shores Mobile Estates (BSME) is a mobile home park that is bounded by Loynes Drive on the north and the Los Cerritos Wetlands on the south, Studebaker Road on the East and Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) on the west. We are at the epicenter of the Wetlands and Home Depot development issues. We are overwhelmingly opposed to both the proposed Home Depot site and any type of commercial, residential or industrial development effort in the Los Cerritos Wetlands.

We have discussed these two issues extensively at the last six of our quarterly Homeowners Association (HOA) General Meetings, beginning with the May 2004 meeting. At two of these meetings, August 2004 and August 2005, we took a vote of the attendees on these two issues. The results were very heavily in favor of opposing the Home Depot development and opposing any commercial, industrial or residential development of the Wetlands. The vote was approximately 90% opposed to the Home Depot development, and virtually 100% opposed to any Wetlands development. Although not all residents attended each meeting, it is reasonable to assume that these figures can be extrapolated throughout the park's 600-member population.

In addition, we support efforts to restore the Wetlands, as funds permit, to a productive element in the local eco-system.

The basis for these decisions is the fact that the 3rd Council District areas, including BSME, immediately affected by these issues are already full to capacity. There is literally no room left for these types of development. The increase in traffic, air and noise pollution, and potential environmental impact are prohibitive.

At present, this area is home to the following:

Two shopping malls and three mini-malls comprising about sixty (60) retail spaces and sixteen (16) movie theater screens

A power plant consisting of nine (9) generating units and attendant structures

One of the five most congested intersections in Los Angeles County (2nd and PCH)

A section of one of the busiest roads in the state, PCH

California State University at Long Beach

Veterans Administration Medical Center

An Elementary School

Some of the most densely packed residential housing in the City of Long Beach

A very important consideration is that the proposed Home Depot and any Wetlands development are not the only proposals being presented at this time or in the near future.

In addition, there are the Boeing Company's development of some of the land at its Seal Beach facility, the construction of an approximately 400 unit residential and retail complex at the current Seaport Marina Motel site at 2nd and PCH, the development of the "Pumpkin Patch" land next to the Marketplace Shopping Center just south of the 2nd and PCH intersection, and a proposed remodeling and possible expansion of the Marketplace Shopping Center. Of these four proposed developments, only the Boeing Company effort was included in the Home Depot Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The other three proposals would bring significant amounts of traffic, air and noise pollution, and environmental impact in addition to the Home Depot proposal.

The increase in vehicle traffic from the Home Depot site, both during construction and subsequent operation, would have a significant impact on Loynes Drive. This road cannot be widened, and already suffers from serious settling problems due to the unstable landfill on which it sits. It is the site of numerous traffic accidents, including a recent fatality, and would likely be a main traffic artery from PCH to the proposed Home Depot site.

We do not subscribe to the belief that some type of development is inevitable at the site proposed for a Home Depot. We feel the purchase of this site by the developer was ill conceived, and should have been prohibited by whichever government agency has jurisdiction. In view of the already thoroughly congested nature of the area, this development proposal should never have been allowed to proceed to this point.

We also reject the notion that removal of the tank farm to make room for the proposed Home Depot site will somehow contribute to the beautification of that area. The grotesquely unsightly power plants immediately behind the tanks will remain no matter what is proposed for that area.

Commercial, residential or industrial development of the Los Cerritos Wetlands must be prevented at all costs. The toxic nature of dumpsites and oil fields in the Wetlands makes any development prohibitively dangerous. The health hazards posed by any Wetlands development would expose nearby residents to unacceptable levels of contamination, including increased cancer risk.

In addition, our coastal wetlands have all but vanished, but in the Los Cerritos Wetlands we now have the opportunity of restoring one of the most valuable wetlands. It is one of the largest salt marshes and only restorable estuary in Los Angeles County (half of it in Long Beach). The most valuable of all wetlands are those at estuaries (river mouths). They link together diverse and interdependent ecosystems between fresh and salt waters, between watershed and ocean, and between river and marine habitats, thereby supporting species that can survive

nowhere else. This is why we can have so many different habitats coexisting in our wetlands - thirteen in all. They don't exist anywhere else!

Healthy wetlands are active bio-filters protecting water quality, scrubbing out toxic contaminants from transported sediments, removing suspended and dissolved solids, and trapping out floating refuse or debris before it reaches our harbor, beaches and ocean.

It also offers an excellent educational opportunity for local students and residents to understand the significance of wetlands in the eco-system.

In addition, we propose a moratorium on any type of development in this area. An effort should be started immediately to assess the condition of the entire area with the intent of having the appropriate agencies realize that additional development in this area is not feasible.

Sincerely,
Tom Lockhart
President, Belmont Shores Mobile Estates

Bixby Village Homeowners' Association

The Bixby Village Homeowners Association's Recommendations are as follows:

1. That the City of Long Beach clearly identifies the areas (parcels of land) which are to be included as "Wetland" areas by the Wetlands Study Group.
2. That the City affirms that Lot 19, which is the area East of Studebaker, North of 2nd Westminster and West of Leisure World, has, in fact, been zoned and developed as industrial property.
3. That the City affirms that it does not have any plans to purchase Lot 19 for any reason; specifically, so that they can demolish the current industrial structures for the purpose of turning the land into a Wetland area.
4. That the City clearly identifies that inasmuch as Lot 19 is not and will not be turned into a Wetland area, that the Wetlands Study Group is not to entertain discussions regarding Lot 19 in their reports.

With the above considerations agreed upon, the Bixby Village Homeowners Association's Continued Recommendations are as follows:

5. That the City is in concurrence that Lot 19 is legally owned by a private citizen; moreover, as such, the City will honor ownership rights. Specifically, that a private citizen may develop and/or improve their property for which it is zoned. In addition, that Lot 19 is legally owned and legally zoned as industrial property.
6. That the City carefully study the re-designation of the zoning for Lot 19 from industrial to retail for the purpose of improving the privately owned property to a Home Depot Design Center.
7. That the City recognize the traffic impact that the Home Depot Design Center will have on Studebaker, 2nd Westminster and to a lesser extent, Loynes. For which the City will set up a committee to work with the Home Depot Design Center and the Homeowner's Associations to alleviate further traffic congestion.

Sincerely,
John Becker,
Bixby Village Homeowners Association

College Estates Homeowners Association

College Estates is located between Anaheim Road on the north, 7th Street on the south, Studebaker Road to the West and the San Gabriel River to the east.

The purpose of this letter is convey the opinions from the College Estates Home Owners Association on the effects of several purposed projects that would have a direct impact on our neighborhood. The cumulative effect of the proposed Home Depot, Seaport Marina Hotel complex, Marina Shores East, and Industrial expansion at Boeing would adversely affect College Estates, and most importantly, threaten the health and stability of the Los Cerritos Wetlands.

During the past fourteen months the city has provided the community representatives education and information regarding our wetlands and surrounding areas, which we have tried to pass on to our respective neighborhoods. In return, we have received limited group responses but we have had one- on- one conversations with many of the people. We (Mike Pugh and Ann Denison) have ascertained that the majority of people are opposed to major commercial development such as previously mentioned. The biggest concerns of our neighborhood are the lack of a viable solution to mitigate the expected increase of traffic and the preservation of valuable open space and wetlands. I would like to mention that of all the people I spoke to there were just two people in support of a Home Depot close by.

In conclusion we feel there is strong opposition to more development (the land where the proposed Home Depot is to be located could be used in a less intrusive way) and there is strong support for preservation and restoration of our remaining open space and wetlands for us, for our environment, and for future generations.

Mike Pugh
Ann Denison

Island Village Homeowners' Association

Councilman Colonna's establishment of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Study Group (LCWSG) was fortuitous and wise. The community of Island Village consists of 182, stand-alone, single-family homes. We are located immediately adjacent to the LCWSG Area of Study (outlined in red on the City of Long Beach Los Cerritos Wetland Study Group Map) and we are major stakeholders in the future development of the entire area.

Island Village is surrounded on three sides by the "Study Area" and our concerns and hopes the future development of this entire area, are many. We appreciate the encompassing aspect of the LCWSG Study Area and are pleased that it was not narrowly focused solely on the proposed Home Depot Site (Lot 19). Island Village will be impacted in major ways by all of the potential development that may occasion within the boundaries of the LCWSG study area, and implore our "Policy Makers" to address future developments of the entire area studied by the group.

Every participating communities' concerns was given a voice in the LCWSG proceedings, and IVHOA greatly appreciates this fact, and the LCWSG assurances to properly voice minority view-points in the final report is reflective of the usually open, courteous, and respectful approach of the majority of the study group participants.

The Community of Island Village recommends:

- Future development anywhere within the Study Area, must have its impact and consequences measured across the entire area. "Wetlands" preservation, protection, augmentation, and restoration, are noble, desirable, and to be encouraged to the greatest feasible extent. However, certain portions of the Study Area are not "Wetlands". It is precisely these non-wetlands areas, which have, and will continue to have, the greatest impact on the Quality of Life of extent neighbors of the Study Area.
- The LA City Dept. of Water and Power, Haynes Generating Station, occupies a significant portion of the Study Area, and, currently, is a huge Noise Generator with demonstrable negative impact on the lives of Island Village residents. Existing Quality of Life Problems (Island Village residents report 'pictures' vibrating on their walls under certain Haynes operating conditions), occasioning from the Haynes Generating Station, must be addressed by the City of Long Beach, before LADWP is granted further 'development' approvals, which LADWP are currently seeking. The LCWSG Study Area is much larger than just "Lot 19" (the proposed Home Depot site), and the Study Area's future development must be reviewed in whole – rather than a series of piece-meal approvals for separate development applications.

- Current traffic congestion problems are massive. Repeated timings of the journey West, on 2nd Street, from Island Village Drive, to the Davis Bridge, on 2nd St., during 'rush hour' yield anecdotal results raging from 7 to 16 minutes. It's a nightmare today – in future - given the potential traffic loads, which will occasion from cumulative development of the area: the Industrial Development of Boeing Property on Westminster (2nd St. in LB), the proposed Home Depot site, the proposed Seaport Marina Hotel Site, etc., summon the incredible image of a more than '10,000 Car freight-train' to be added to our extent traffic problems. Island Village is particularly vulnerable in several ways; we have no sidewalks – no sidewalks at all – to anywhere in Long Beach; 2nd Street is posted at 50 MPH – and functions at 55-60 MPH, if we need, or want, to go anywhere, we are reliant upon safely entering a corridor of 55-60 MPH vehicles. One cannot walk safely on 2nd Street, and getting into the 2nd Street traffic flow, in a vehicle, can be a 'crap shoot' at many times of the day.
- Road noise, generated by high speed vehicular traffic, traveling east and west on 2nd street, is particularly extreme when-ever heavy vehicles pass our community. We suggest that 'No Heavy Vehicle' rules be applied to alleviate the road noise problems Island Village Residents suffer from 2nd Street?
- Without regard to future developments within the Study Area, could-we-not, today, obtain greater coordination of traffic signals between the City and Cal Trans? The anecdotal 7-16 minutes may not have been derived scientifically, never the less – it is actual experience. On any Friday evening, one can stand on the Davis Bridge and looking west on 2nd St., and see traffic stopped all the way from Ravenna to the 2nd St./PCH intersection. It's already a nightmare. We need help today!
- Any future development should take into account the totality of traffic congestion already experienced, by the Study Area's neighboring residents. Comprehensive traffic planning for the entire study area is needed. A development moratorium, pending an optimum plan for the entire area, seems to be the only prudent thing to do. This task is massive – the consequent effects of development within the Study Area, upon our Quality of Life as Long Beach residents are paramount. Put any further development on the 'back-burner' until we know the totality of what may be, the 'best uses' of the non-wetlands portions of the Study Area and Zone the area appropriately.
- Given the inelastic traffic flow restrictions which the bridges surrounding the Study Area obtain, it is quite likely that the only measurable relief to be had will prove to be extending Studebaker Road all the way to Pacific Coast Highway. The least possible encroachment upon desirable 'wetland' may well be, more bridges – if we can environmentally 'bridge' the wetlands, thereby minimizing negative impact on the wetlands, some

measurable traffic flow relief will be had. This Studebaker to PCH extension should be seriously studied, and, if found to help traffic flow, implemented.

- Single lane On/Off-ramps, from the 7th St/22 Freeway to Studebaker Road, are huge traffic congestion machines. It is near impossible to travel East from Studebaker Road to enter College Park Drive. The Off-ramp traffic from west bound 22 Freeway. Exiting vehicles, turn this journey into 'suicide roulette'. These On/Off Ramps are dangerous areas and need revision. The City of Long Beach must take the lead in securing correction of this problem.

We Island Village Residents are ultra mindful of those issues which can potentially lead to serious deteriorations of our Quality of Life. We think that all City of Long Beach Residents, are Stakeholders in either maintaining, or, better still, improving our Quality of Life. The City 'Fathers' must be mindful of these same Quality of Life Issues. The Study Group (LCWSG) was charged with arriving at a set of recommendations for the entire Study Area. The charge was pressed repeatedly upon the Group, by Group-appointed Chairman – Mr. Ric Trent. Island Village is pleased that the study was not narrow or focused on only one aspect of the Study Area's future development. The entire area must be re-master planned before any single portion of the non-wetlands area is developed, and maximum feasible remediation of the "Wetlands" should be a primary objective.

We in Island Village are grateful for the opportunity to have participated and to have been heard, and herein offer to continue to serve if we can.

Submitted on behalf of Island Village Homeowners Association Members

Respectfully,

Dave Bates, President, Island Village HOA
Denis Craig, Public Affairs Liaison, Island Village HOA
C. J. Hentzen, Member-At-Large, Island Village HOA

Naples Improvement Association

On October 19, 2005, The Naples Improvement Association held its Membership Meeting. I updated the audience on the Los Cerritos Wetland Study Group, (LCWSG), and spoke for about 20 minutes regarding some of the issues and what we had learned over the past 15 months from the experts who made presentations to our group. There was a question and answer period at the end of my remarks. I then polled the audience to ascertain their opinion about the future of the area in the study. Here are the questions and results of that poll.

QUESTION: Please indicate by a show of how many of you want to see the Los Cerritos Wetlands preserved AND restored.

RESPONSE: 100% YES

QUESTION: Please indicate by a show of hands how many of you support the creation of a Master Plan for the Wetlands AND surrounding areas...BEFORE any development proceeds.

RESPONSE: 100% YES

QUESTION: Please indicate by a show of hands how many of you want NO DEVELOPMENT in the Wetlands or in the areas immediately adjacent to them.

RESPONSE: 50% YES

QUESTION: Please indicate by a show of hands how many of you would support SOME DEVELOPMENT in the identified area if it were well conceived and fit into a coordinated MASTER PLAN.

RESPONSE: 50% YES

It is evident that the residents of Naples Island are very concerned about the key lifestyle issues that are part of the potential development of the Wetlands and surrounding areas.

Many people spoke with me after the meeting and expressed their deep concern over the traffic implications of the developments that are already in process for this area.

As a synopsis, the residents of Naples Island overwhelmingly support the preservation and restoration of the Los Cerritos Wetlands. They overwhelmingly support the creation of a Master Plan for the whole area, before any development proceeds. They are divided equally on the question of: NO development, versus, PLANNED development that arises out of an over arching Master Plan for the Area studied.

Sincerely,
Ric Trent
NIA Member

Pacific Villas Homeowners' Association

The purpose of this letter is to document the opinions of the majority of the residents of Pacific Villas. Pacific Villas is a planned unit development of thirty-eight single-family homes located at the southwest corner of Bellflower and Eliot Street. I have lived in Long Beach for the past eight years and have been the President of the homeowner association for the past one and one-half years.

Homeowners were contacted individually and in small meetings by me and by my alternate. Issues discussed were: land use (including proposed commercial developments), traffic, preservation and restoration of wetlands, and our environment in general.

Traffic

Traffic is an overarching issue. Almost everyone made comments about traffic congestion and expressed concern that something needs to be done. Traffic concerns spill over into opinions on all development issues. A number of homeowners expressed the opinion that Studebaker Road should be extended to Pacific Coast Highway. When advised of the negative wetlands impact, the suggestion was to elevate it over the wetlands. There were no opposing views.

Preservation and Restoration of Wetlands

There was universal opinion that the wetlands in all three parcels should be acquired, remediated and restored. This is probably our number one priority issue. Residents are well aware of the success of the Huntington Beach wetlands and feel that Long Beach should be able to accomplish the same thing for the betterment of our community.

Land Use

Many homeowners are concerned about preserving open space in the study area. Again traffic congestion was the driving issue as well as the feeling that the southeast area is already dense enough. We don't believe that the Bixby property will come back on the market anytime soon because of the price of crude oil and the fact they still have a fifteen-year oil lease. We believe that it is feasible to purchase the wetlands portion of the Bixby property.

Homeowners would like to see a master plan for the area we have been studying. They read of possible developments like Home Depot, Seaport Marina Hotel, Pumpkin Patch etc. and are concerned about the apparent lack of a master plan.

Home Depot

The Home Depot project deserves special mention for two reasons. One, because it has received an enormous amount of interest and publicity. Secondly, because it is one area where we received differing views. The majority of our residents are strongly opposed to this development, primarily for traffic and

pollution reasons. "Who needs it!" is a common comment. At the 2004 annual meeting of Pacific Villas Homeowners' Association, the association took and recorded a vote against the Home Depot project.

The minority raises these issues:

It is not a Home Depot contractor type store; it is a "Design Center" concept. These types of Home Depot Design Centers don't have day workers, don't have lots of in and out traffic, and are relatively clean and neat buildings.

The owner has a right to develop his property and some other use of it may be worse for the community.

In conclusion, the Pacific Villas Homeowners Association recommends that a master plan for the development of the Southeast area be created that will address the issues of the utilization of the remaining open space. Traffic and pollution considerations remain paramount. We further recommend that all of the wetlands areas be purchased by whatever means possible so that they can be restored and the public can be given access.

Samuel J. Smock
President, Pacific Villas Homeowners' Association
October 26, 2005

Spinnaker Bay Homeowners' Association

We wish to thank Councilmember Colonna for the opportunity to participate in the Study Group's discussions over the past year and a half. Our 250 home community, being surrounded on three sides by water, is a major stakeholder in the future of our wetlands areas. Many of us are avid boaters, kayakers, and/or walkers, and we are well aware that the wetlands are a major part of our quality of life and property values.

Of considerable disappointment was the fact that, from almost the very outset, the Study Group appeared to be more about being 'anti-Home Depot' than about a vision for The Los Cerritos Wetlands. We are convinced that this immediate bias led many of our invited neighborhood associations to decline participation.

Following are Spinnaker Bay Homeowner Association's recommendation:

- That the city of Long Beach gives the Los Cerritos Wetlands restoration and preservation a very high priority. It is home to a large number of water associated bird species as well as salt marsh fish species. We realize that this task is complex, but also recognize that there is nearby precedent, namely Seal Beach Naval Weapons Station and Bolsa Chica.
- That the City distinguishes between what is and what is not "Wetlands area". As we look at the area under consideration by the Wetlands Study Group, it is basically divided into three primary areas ---the area East of Studebaker, North of 2nd/Westminster and West of Leisure World. This area is referred to as Parcel 19 and is "developed", which we will further discuss later in this paragraph. The second area is West of Studebaker, Southeast of Loynes and North of 2nd Street. The third area is southeast of 2nd Street, East of PCH and West of the Hellman Ranch Property. Only the latter two areas can properly be referred to as "The Los Cerritos Wetlands".

Not only is Lot 19 not "Wetlands", it is industrial property. It is zoned that way and has been developed for more than 50 years. Besides being the home of several tank farms, two substantial power-generating plants and other varied industrially related businesses; it will likely soon include a desalinating plant for Long Beach Water Department. To think and or even propose that this area should be torn down and revert back into Wetlands is not being realistic.

- That the City recognizes that parcel 19 is privately owned and that the owner has ownership rights. With all the emphasis that this Study Group has put on the Home Depot piece of property, we must recognize that as property owner he can do virtually anything on it for which it is zoned - i.e. industrial! The Study Group could propose that the City purchase this \$50 million property, but it chose instead to be totally polarized on opposing a

Home Depot Design Center. That surely is not what this Group was asked to do.

- As to the traffic congestion issue, we recommend that Studebaker Road be extended to Pacific Coast Highway with the least possible encroachment upon the wetlands area. This may require a slight compromise of our wetlands priorities, but with the limitations that the surrounding bridges impose on traffic flow, it is the most sensible solution to relieve congestion of the PCH and Second Street intersection.

In summary it is disappointing that The Wetlands Study Group chose to focus on the Home Depot Design Center issue. The real purpose of the Study Group was to arrive at a set of recommendations to our 3rd. District Councilman as to how we can best preserve the true Los Cerritos Wetlands, while at the same time develop a balanced environmental solution to the extension of Studebaker Road to Pacific Coast Highway.

Respectively submitted by the Spinnaker Bay Homeowners Association Board of Directors

Tom Chiarenza, President
Hank Snapper, Vice President
Ted Dalton, Treasurer
Harley Deere, Member-at-large
Bobbie Cusato, Member-at-large

University Park Estates Neighborhood Association

University Park Estates (UPE) located at 7th Street, Studebaker Road, Loynes Drive and Los Cerritos Wetlands is at the gateway to the Study Area. We are a cherished coastal community and are fervently protective of our lifestyle. We oppose commercial development, such as Home Depot, since it will forever alter our peaceful neighborhood. We do anticipate the restoration of Los Cerritos Wetlands, which should be the platform for all planning decision making.

UPE has had several homeowners meetings since March 2004 and based on attendees' participation and letters to the city's Planning Department, 98% of the residents oppose the proposed Home Depot. The mere construction of this project will be detrimental to our neighborhood. One of the numerous examples is Loynes Drive, which was created by utilizing landfill built over an historic waste dump and never intended as the access street to any major commercial development. It suffers from constant subsidence that has resulted in traffic deaths. Furthermore, there is methane gas under Loynes Drive and when disturbed could be disastrous to our homes and lives. After construction, we will be saddled with loitering day laborers in our neighborhood and Channel View Park, which is adjacent to Kettering Elementary School. Home Depot has offered to extend Channel View Park along 7th Street and the Garden Grove (22) Freeway to mitigate its inability to meet its open space obligation of its proposed development plan. This park extension, if Home Depot were to be built, is adjacent to the kindergarten classes and playground. It is inconceivable that Home Depot, which is notorious for attracting day laborers, would be built across from an elementary school. The location of this Home Depot project is incompatible with UPE and Kettering Elementary School.

The Study Area lacks a comprehensive master plan, thus, the impact of proposed and future development cannot be reliably analyzed. The present piece-meal approach will be ruinous to our neighborhood(s). Consideration must be given to the interconnectedness of all land uses both inside and outside the Study Area that have direct impact, such as: the new Boeing project in Seal Beach, the Seaport Marina project at 2nd Street and PCH with 425 residential units **PLUS** retail, actual traffic from all other present and future projects, detrimental affects to the environment and health (including asthma) from the increased pollution, and so forth.

There are additional issues that must be taken into the analysis of the Study Area. Being a coastal community, lying between the ocean and the San Gabriel River, it is within the jurisdiction of the California Coastal Commission. The status of the historic toxic dumpsites, such as the land adjacent to Studebaker Road and between the Los Cerritos Channel and Westminster Avenue must also be tested and analyzed. The Study Area is within the seismic zone of the second largest fault in California, the Inglewood-Newport Fault. The wetlands are our best defense against flooding and other natural disasters. Long Beach is

miserably short of public open space and the Study Area provides this last opportunity.

In summary, the Study Area requires a master plan before there is any decision making of present and future development. The platform for the master plan must be the restoration of the wetlands and creation of public open space. The master plan must integrate respect for our coastal environment, retain and improve the residents' quality of life, and create alliances with government, public and private groups toward achieving these goals.

Respectfully,
Janice Dahl, President
University Park Estates

PART IV: Meeting Minutes

MEMORANDUM

Date: September 28, 2004

**To: Greg Carpenter
Cc: Mike Conway**

From: Vickie Becker

Subject: Meeting Minutes San Gabriel River Study Group 9/8/04

Purpose/Project Summary:

The subject site is bounded to the north by the Los Cerritos Channel, the San Gabriel River and is to the south and east, and Pacific Coast Highway to the west.

This area was part of the County of Los Angeles until it was annexed in the late 1990's as a part of the City of Long Beach. The County of Los Angeles never established Coastal Program for the area; to date neither has the City of Long Beach.

- Property ownership is divided into five (5) separate property owners:
 - The northeastern most portion of the property is owned by Southern California Edison Company (SCE)
 - The portion to the south of the SCE property extending to 2nd street is owned by AES Alamitos LLC.
 - A portion of this land is also owned by Studebaker LB LLC and is zoned industrial. Currently there is a proposal for the development of Home Depot at this location.
 - The majority of the land is owned by the Bixby Ranch Company. This property lies east of Studebaker Road. It is bounded to the west by Pacific Coast Highway, to the north by the Los Cerritos Channel and to the South by the San Gabriel River.
 - The southeastern most corner of the property bounded to the east by the San Gabriel River and the north by 2nd Street is owned by Bryant Ernest (Hellman).

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	<u>BIXBY RANCH CO.</u>	<u>SCE</u>	<u>AES</u>	<u>BRYANT</u>	<u>STUDEBAKER</u>
TOTAL ACERAGE	195.54	26.59	112.19	77.64	16.36

Bixby Ranch Company has listed approximately 190 acres for sale, located within the Los Cerritos Wetlands area. The list price for the property is \$1.8 mill. This sale price includes the land. There are also private oil rights on the property. If the City or another entity were to purchase the oil rights as well the cost of the property would increase by approximately \$1 million per well.

The City would like to purchase property. The goal is to restore as much of the Wetlands area as possible. It is unknown as to how much of the land is contaminated and how much remediation will be required. It is also unknown at this point what the difference in cost will be to restore the land for wetlands use versus residential uses.

Currently the City has a grant for approximately \$7,000,000,000 provided by the Coastal Conservancy. However the grant is about to expire. There are no General Fund monies available for the purchase of the land.

Options to explore:

- Joint Powers of Authority
 - City of Long Beach
 - Port
 - Coastal Conservancy
 - Trust for Public Land

Meeting Notes:

Intro:

Attendees, Introduction

Primary groups and Representatives included:

City of Long Beach:

Frank Colonna, Councilman District 3
Mike Conway, Property Services
Greg Carpenter, Planning Bureau Manager

Community Groups:

Janice Dahl, Los Cerritos Wetlands Task Force
Bruce Monroe, Wildlife Refuge
Bob Ellis, Bixby Village
Tom Lockhart, Belmont Shores Mobile Home Assoc.
Rick Trent, Naples Isle HOA

See sign in sheet and Invitation List for more information.

Discussion:

9/8 meeting:

Meeting had poor turnout. As a result, it was decided that this meeting would be an informal meeting to discuss an overview of the project, issues, goals and objectives both for the City and the surrounding Community.

Suggested format for future meetings:

- Meetings set for 2nd Wednesday of each month. Each meeting shall be approximately 2 hours long beginning at 6:00 pm and ending at 8:00 pm.
- Location: Seal Beach Yacht Club
- Regular "Focus" meetings should be restricted to invited Board Members and City Staff
- Separate meetings should be held for general public input.
- Next Meeting 10/13/04. Invitations should be sent out again to potential board members.

Objectives for the next meeting:

- Select Chairperson other than City Rep.
- City will act as a meeting facilitator and a resource for the selected committee.
- Committee selection is based on representatives of communities most affected. Selection of members was made by Councilman Colonna's office. Those who wish to be included on the invitee list and to act as board members should make a request to the Council Member's office.
- Invite Park Estates HOA
- Schedule 4 +/- focus meetings.

***Copies of the Seadip PD should be included and made available at the next meeting.

Overall objectives:

What we'd like to accomplish:

- Community outreach, what to do with this newly available 190 acres?
 - Appoint decision making body
 - Hold Public Hearings
 - How will they be appointed (By Council?)
- Possible sub-groups
 - Planning
 - Management
- Land Use Designations/Recommendation

Topics/Issues:

- Public Space

- Private owners and developers
- Land Use Designations
 - Currently there are two small portions of land that are zoned for residential use (see sea-dip, sub-areas 11a and 11b)
 - At the northeast corner abutting E. 2nd St.
 - 106.3 acres are currently zoned for wetlands uses (see Sea-dip, sub areas 23 and 33)
 - Two parcels of land currently owned by the Bixby Ranch Co. (see sea-dip sub-areas 24, north and south)
 - One at the southwest corner of Loynes Dr. and Studebaker Road. This parcel is zoned for an interpretive center for the bordering marsh. The developer of Sub-area 11 (a) (residential) is to contact the State of California or other agency responsible for the management of Sub. 33
 - The other across Loynes Dr. at the northwest corner.
 - This area is to be dedicated to the City of Long Beach for park and playground purposes.
 - The northeastern portion of the property, bounded by 2nd St to the south is zoned for industrial uses (see sea-dip sub-area 19)
 - The southern most portion of the property, south of Second Street and west of the San Gabriel River is zoned for business park uses (see sea-dip, sub areas 25 & 26).
- Private oil rights
 - Slant Drilling, 2 sites needed
 - Industrial property along Studebaker
 - The Home Depot proposal
- Environmental
 - Is this property in the Tidelands
 - Are we revising Seadip?
- Contamination
 - Flora
 - Noise
 - Light
- Transportation:
 - Add Loynes Dr.
 - What are the long-term effects of opening Loynes Dr.?
- Methane Observation
- Who else should be involved in the decision making process?
 - Should we invite Rep's from Seal Beach?
 - Should we invite LADWP?
 - Should we invite other regulatory agencies?
 - Coastal Conservancy
 - Fish and Game (State)
 - Fish and Wildlife (Fed.)
 - Army Corps of Engineers
- Possible Joint Powers Authority:
 - City of Long Beach Port

- Coastal Conservancy
- Trust for Public Land

****Benefit: Power of eminent domain management (get list of additional benefits)**

*****Downside: Moves slowly**

MEMORANDUM

Date: November 2, 2004

To: Mike Conway

Cc: Greg Carpenter
Rick Trent

From: Vickie Becker

Subject: Meeting Minutes San Gabriel River Study Group 10/14/04

Meeting Notes:

Intro:

Attendees, Introduction

Thomas Marchese	Janice Dahl	Lisa Bergland
C.J. Hentzen	Lisa Rinaldi	Maryanne Golden
M. Fleming	Adria Stoker	Jim Carter
Denis & Tina Craig	Michael Pugh	Don May
Dave Bates	Sam Smock	
Tom Lockhart	Ric Trent	

City of Long Beach:

Mike Conway, Property Services
Greg Carpenter, Planning Bureau Manager
Vickie Becker, Planner

Discussion:

Overview of previous meeting (see minutes from 9/8).

Purpose of the study group is to make suggestions and, or recommendations to City Council on a new zoning policy or an updated planning document for the study group area.

- What types of development are desirable, acceptable, feasible....

- Is a Master Plan Necessary?
- Can we amend the current documentation (Seadip) to include the study area?

The manner in which the recommendations will be generated is through public meetings. This shall be a community driven process where City Staff will work in facilitating the group with information and education.

Meeting is open for Q & A:

Q: Is it now legal to develop the existing wetlands?

A:

- The City of Long Beach annexed the property in 1997.
- Seadip was never certified with the Coastal Commission for a large part of the area in question.
- Currently a developer would have to go to the Coastal Commission with a proposal that the Commission would approve.
- No development proposal has been proposed to the City as of yet.
- As it stands a study of the property needs to be done by a private entity or by the City. However, should a proposal come through prior to a City review and official policy recordation the onus would fall on the developer to establish a wetlands boundary.
- The developer would be required to do an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that would be reviewed by the City.
- The purpose of the study group and recommendations to the City Council is a proactive stance so that the City is prepared to deal with any potential development proposals by private entities.

Q: Can the City institute a moratorium of the study area?

A: The City Council can if they determine that a state of emergency exists.

Q: When will the City make a decision?

A:

- Not until an application for development is received.
- The goal of the study sessions is to be ahead of the game.
- The group is a doorway for input from City residents.

Q: How can un-zoned property be sold?

A:

- Private property owners have the right to sell. This includes privately owned wetlands.
- This is a big piece of property.

- Most of the land is contaminated in some way. A large portion is brown fields.
- Funding may be available for remediation and development.
- Market forces will dictate the sale of the property.

Q: Why hasn't the City been participating in some form of agreement regarding the Bixby land?

A:

- The City has been participating. There are two documented efforts.
 - The City attempted to have Seadip certified with the Coastal Commission. The proposal was not approved.
 - The City has made attempts to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Bixby Ranch Company. No agreement has been made.

Discussion of Meeting Format and Committee Selection:

<u>Committee Members</u>	<u>Alternates</u>	<u>Association</u>
Ric Trent, Chair	Vice Chair to be selected at a later date.	Naples Neighborhood Association
David Bates	Denis Craig	Island Village
Jim Carter		Bixby Village HOA
Benjamin Goldberg	Janice Dahl	University Park Estates
Shelly Hanks	Sonia Pawluczyk	Alamitos Heights
Tom Lockhart		Belmont Shores
Bob Metzger	Tom Patterson	Bay Harbour
Sam Smock	Lisa Rinaldi	Pacific Villas HOA
Mike Pugh		College Estates East
Hank Snapper		Spinnaker Bay

Minute Clerk:

Vickie Becker, City of Long Beach

Meeting Format:

DATES:

Meetings are set for 2nd Wednesday of each month

TIME:

Each meeting shall be approximately 2 hours long beginning at 6:00 pm and ending at 8:00 pm

LOCATION:

Seal Beach Yacht Club

RULES:

Parliamentary or Rogers, Rick Trent will provide documentation.

FORMAT:

- 1st 15 minutes are reserved for public input. 3 minute time frame for each speaker (will not allow for one person (3 min.) over the initial 15 minutes). Letters, notes and e-mails will be accepted for those who cannot attend.

***POINT OF CONTACT: Vickie Becker, Vickie_Becker@Longbeach.gov

- 6:30-7:30 hour, speaker session
- Questions, answers and comments 7:30-8:00.

The meeting will be held in a long table format. City Reps will arrive early to arrange room.

***Name Plates shall be provided for both Committee Members and Alternates.

VOTING:

- One vote per organization

MEMORANDUM

Date: December 1, 2004

To: Mike Conway

Cc: Greg Carpenter
Dave Roseman
Rick Trent

From: Vickie Becker

Subject: Meeting Minutes San Gabriel River Study Group 11/10/04

Meeting Notes:

**Roll Call:
Attendees**

<u>Committee Member</u>	<u>Alternate</u>	<u>Committee Members</u>	<u>Alternates</u>	<u>Association</u>
X	NA	Ric Trent, Chair	Vice Chair to be selected at a later date.	Naples Neighborhood Association
X	X	David Bates	Denis Craig	Island Village
X	X	Jim Carter	Dave Bower	Bixby Village HOA
NA	X	Ben Goldberg	Janice Dahl	University Park Estates
NA	X	Shelly Hanks	Sonia Pawluczyk	Alamitos Heights
X	NA	Tom Lockhart		Belmont Shores
X	NA	Bob Metzger	Tom Patterson	Bay Harbour
X	X	Sam Smock	Lisa Rinaldi	Pacific Villas HOA
X	NA	Mike Pugh		College Estates East
X	X	Hank Snapper	Ted Dalton	Spinnaker Bay

City of Long Beach:

Mike Conway, Property Services Bureau Manager
Greg Carpenter, Planning Bureau Manager
David Roseman, City Traffic Engineer

Vickie Becker, Planner

Review of Minutes from 10/14/04 meeting.

Minutes Approved

Meeting open for public comment.

No comments

Speaker Presentation:

Dave Roseman, City Traffic Engineer, City of Long Beach.

Mr. Roseman gave a brief review of his education and personal background indicating that he is a resident of the City of Long Beach, and a graduate of California State University, Long Beach. He worked for the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation for approximately 14 years and came to work for the City of Long Beach in April of 2002.

The discussion then continued with Mr. Roseman asking the audience to define traffic congestion. Many of the audience members came up with some general definitions such as waiting at a traffic light through several light changes, slow speeds on major thoroughfares, and too many cars. Mr. Roseman then explained that there is no single industry established definition for traffic congestion. Although a number of factors relating to congestion, such as volume, stops, delay, etc., can be measured, the concept of what is congestion and how severe it may be remains an individual and personal assessment.

The discussion then moved to ways of determining or conducting a traffic study for development projects. Mr. Roseman presented a copy of the "ITE Trip Generation" manual and explained that the manual consists of a series of tables and equations used to estimate the approximate number of trips anticipated from a specific type of development. The tables further define the number of weekend, weekday, and peak period trips by various factors including number of square feet, employees, units, etc.

Traffic Study Methodology:

Mr. Roseman explained that the first step in analyzing or projecting the impact a specific development might have on the existing roadway network would be to determine the number of anticipated inbound and outbound trips generated by time. As an example, Mr. Roseman used an average 2,000 square foot home, which is anticipated to generate 10 trips a day. That same 2,000 square feet in an office building would be expected to generate approximately 20 trips. While 2,000 square feet in a shopping center would be expected to generate 80 trips per day.

Once the trip generation is determined for a proposed development the next step is to determine the trip distribution, or where the trips are coming from or going to. Development of a trip distribution pattern for a development is not an exact science and is generally determined by traffic engineers based on information regarding the surrounding roadway network and land use as well as a healthy dose of engineering judgment. For large-scale developments a computerized traffic model is typically used as a guide to assist traffic engineers in determining an appropriate trip distribution pattern.

The trip generation numbers combined with the trip distribution pattern begins to provide a picture of how the traffic volumes from the new development will impact the existing roadway network. The future traffic conditions with the development can then be determined by adding the new traffic volumes with the existing traffic volumes as gathered from traditional traffic counts. Traffic engineers then analyze a variety of traffic scenarios that include the existing traffic conditions, future conditions without the project, future conditions with the project, and future conditions with the project and any proposed roadway improvements. Typically, traffic engineers use the traffic volumes during weekday peak periods (7am-9am and 4pm-6pm) in their analysis to capture the worst-case traffic scenarios.

Once the traffic volumes have been determined for the roadway network for all of the various scenarios, traffic engineers then analyze the data to determine if the added traffic on the network is considered a significant traffic impact. Each city has its own procedures for calculating impacts and determining which impacts are considered significant. In the City of Long Beach the ICU method of determining intersection "Level of Service" is used to perform the calculations and make those determinations.

Mr. Roseman then explained how an intersection's "Level of Service" is determined. Basically, an intersection's "Level of Service" is similar to the academic grading scale with "A" being excellent (free flow) and "F" being failure (forced flow). Unlike the academic grading scale, "E" is considered capacity and is typically the peak hour goal for maximum traffic throughput. On a freeway for example "Level of Service E" is approximately 35mph at approximately 2,200 vehicles per lane per hour. On arterial streets "Level of Service" is more complex to determine and it is generally only calculated at intersections. That calculation is generally based on the number of travel lanes, opposing traffic volumes, and the type of traffic signal operation. In Long Beach any development that reduces an intersection's "Level of Service" by 2% for grades "D"- "F" is considered significant.

Other issues when mitigating and projecting traffic flow.

There are many other factors that can also contribute to traffic congestion and circulation impacts. Traffic light sequencing and roadway jurisdiction also have an impact on how traffic flows. The State Department of Transportation (CalTrans) controls all the traffic signals on PCH, 7th Street east of PCH, and at

freeway ramps. Traffic signal coordination across jurisdictional boundaries is not always synchronized for technical and political reasons. There are about twenty signalized intersections surrounding the wetlands area. About half of those traffic signals are under CalTrans control.

Determining alternate routes and other mitigation:

Much of the existing traffic congestion in the area of the wetlands is a result of the many bridges in the area and limited opportunities for additional roadways or roadway widening. Much of the existing roadway and bridge infrastructure was built at a time when traffic demands were not as great. IN order to support additional larger scale developments in the area it is reasonable to assume that significant infrastructure investment would be needed. Some alternatives for improving the existing situation and helping to mitigate the impacts of future development include: creating right hand turn pockets, creating new roadway connections, and improving traffic signal operations.

- 1) Adding turn lanes
 - a. Possible at some locations; however, many intersections are under CalTrans jurisdiction and thus improvements must meet CalTrans design standards. CalTrans standards require that all State Routes such as PCH have a minimum lane widths of 12 feet (City standards call for 10 foot lanes) and include an 8 foot shoulders (City has no shoulder requirements). In some areas there is little available room for street widening because of either physical conditions or existing development. Such constraints create challenges for creating new lanes. However, the City of Long Beach is pursuing a project with CalTrans to improve the intersection of PCH and 2nd Street (Westminster) by widening the southbound approach.
- 2) Creating new roads
 - a. Possible when the land is available; however, because of the extensive network of waterways most new road construction has limited benefit without widening a bridge or constructing a new bridge.
- 3) Improving traffic signal operations
 - a. Improving traffic operations through traffic signal upgrades or timing improvements could create traffic problems at other intersections along the same roadway.
 - b. Cross-jurisdictional cooperation on traffic signal operations is not always possible due to technical or political constraints.

What is the staff process when a proposal for a project is submitted?

- 1) Staff analyzes the project and determines whether an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), which includes a traffic study, is required. If an EIR is not required the City's Traffic Engineer can require an independent traffic study. A 3rd party consultant is hired to perform the study.
- 2) Staff reviews the EIR, or Traffic Study and either accepts or rejects the analysis. If necessary, mitigation measures are determined within the study and negotiated with City Staff. The costs incurred by the improvements are assessed and charged to the developer by means of a traffic impact fee. These fees are determined based on factors of the development such as number of bedrooms, or square footage of development.

Possible mitigation at PCH and 2nd Street

- 1) The possible extension of Studebaker Road, issues and questions.
 - a) Issues
 - b) Soils Conditions
 - c) Improve the left hand turn lane and 2nd Street and PCH.
 - d) Improve Traffic Signal coordination with Marina Drive.
 - e) Extend Shopkeeper Road to connect at PCH.
 - f) Can we widen Studebaker Road? (Possibly through Traffic Element)
 - g) Redesigning the circulation pattern must include the intersection at 7th Street and PCH.
 - h) Can we implement an additional freeway ramp at bridges into Belmont Heights and Naples?
 - i) Can we widen the bridges?

Other Issues:

Public comment reserved for next meeting 12/8/04
Choose Group Name next meeting 12/8/04

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 25, 2005

To: Greg Carpenter

Cc: Angela Reynolds, Rick Trent

From: Mercedes McLemore

Subject: Minutes from Los Cerritos Wetlands Meeting

Meeting Notes:

Roll Call: Attendees

City of Long Beach:

Greg Carpenter, Planning Bureau Manager
Mercedes McLemore, Planner

Review of Minutes from last meeting

Minutes Approved

Meeting Open for Public Comments

Bixby Ranch Village is no longer being marketed; possible conflict of interest; pulled off the market until further notice

Speaker Presentation:

Kevin Green, SCS Engineers

Mr. Green gave a brief review of his previous experiences working with Phase I and Phase II site reviews for Environmental Assessments and Remediation. He currently works for SCS Engineers, a landfill engineering firm based out of Long Beach. He has worked as a geologist for SCS for 18 years, during which he has worked on various landfills in Los Angeles, and has completed Phase I and Phase II reviews.

The discussion then continued with Mr. Green giving an overview of what environmental assessment and remediation involves, explaining the differences between Phase I and Phase II assessments, and Remediation.

Mr. Green explained that Phase I is the environmental assessment of a site. It has three main components: site inspection, where someone goes to the site looking for indicators of contaminants such as underground storage tanks;

reviewing site history, such as city records and directories to make sure that there was no landfill or previous use that would contaminate the site. Mr. Green then creates a compilation of regulatory database information and files, which include records of anytime a prior business disposed of hazardous wastes on the site. All of this research is completed prior to any soil sampling or environmental investigation.

Mr. Green went on to explain a Phase II analysis, which involves soil sampling. This is a focused search of the project site to see if there are any of the suspected contaminants/pollutants from Phase I database present. This can be done in several phases, 3-5 potentially, requiring additional analysis. Mr. Green stated that SCS uses independent labs for the analysis of these soil samples.

Mr. Green explained that if remediation is necessary, this involves "cleaning up" the project site to meet cleanup standards based on risk to groundwater ("no degradation" policy of the state), risk to humans (Cal EPA standards, human health risk assessment) and/or disposal restrictions (standards for emptying substances into a landfill).

Findings

After providing this overview, Mr. Green then broke down the findings for his Phase I review of Los Cerritos Wetlands. There are several oil field operations and landfills in the project area.

- 1) Mr. Green first referred to Map No. 1, which has all landfills in the area plotted. There are two existing landfills on the property (see City Dump & Salvage 3 and 4). Both of these landfills are old municipal solid waste dumps listed in the regulatory databases several times. SCS did an assessment of this area almost 15 years ago, and found that these sites contained various contaminants of concern. Mr. Green did a solid waste assessment test, including ground swats and water swats. No significant surface emissions were founds.
- 2) Mr. Green then referred to Map No. 2, which has all of the oil fields in the area plotted. There are 70 oil fields in the vicinity. Mr. Green lists the various issues associated with these fields, including the following:
 - a. Impacted soils
 - b. Tanks with potential for leaks
 - c. Many of these facilities operated on diesel fuel, and this potential contaminant may exist widely on the site.
 - d. 1 underground storage tank found that is associated to Conoco Inc., listed as a historic tank

After Mr. Green's presentation, the floor was open for comments. Various suggestions were made for the project site, including converting it into a remediated wetland for local government, and/or remediating part of the project site and using the rest for residential development.

Other Issues

Representative from California Coastal Conservancy will be at next meeting to discuss finding potential for this site 2/9/05

MEMORANDUM

Date: February 11, 2005

To: Greg Carpenter

From: Mercedes McLemore

Subject: Minutes from February 9, 2005 Los Cerritos Wetlands Meeting

Meeting Notes:

Roll Call: Attendees

City of Long Beach:

Greg Carpenter, Planning Bureau Manager
Mercedes McLemore, Planner

Review of Minutes from last meeting

Minutes Approved from January 12, 2005

Meeting Open for Public Comments—None

Meeting Open for Staff Comments

- Website is available;
http://www.longbeach.gov/plan/pb/cpd/los_cerritos.asp
- Reminder of General Plan Update Land Use & Mobility Elements Public Workshop, February 26, 2005 8:30 a.m.- noon
- Future Guest Speakers
 - Local Coastal Commission Representative
 - Angela Reynolds, Community and Environmental Planning Officer

Speaker Presentation:

Mary Small, California State Coastal Conservancy (i.e. "Conservancy")

Ric Trent gave a brief introduction of the guest speaker, introducing the group and explaining our purpose to her. Ms. Small explained her position with the Coastal Conservancy, stating that she acts as a conduit to get funding and enhance our efforts to acquire the wetlands. Her duties also include working on the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project, and developing strategies to

determine "priority lands" from Santa Barbara to San Diego. Ms. Small stated that the Los Cerritos Wetlands are considered priority. She took the project over about six months ago from Chris Chaplain, who originally handled the project site. Her office is in Oakland where the Conservancy is based, but most of her work is done in Southern California, including the Ballona Wetlands.

Ms. Small opened the presentation up by offering a background of the project site. There are three current landowners targeted for the land acquisition, Bixby, Bryant, and Hellman (in Seal Beach). The Conservancy is currently not in any negotiations for acquiring the Bixby property. Ms. Small pointed out the central location of the Bryant property on a map, and stated that the Conservancy just completed an appraisal to determine how much of this property is developable and assess its value. The Conservancy is still in the negotiation phase, which is the most Ms. Small could disclose because purchasing detail is confidential information.

Ms. Small explained that the Hellman property appraisal is currently being updated. She stated that she was confident a price will be agreed upon and that once cleanup of Hellman has been established, acquisition can go through. Ms. Small explained that the Hellman property has the best chance of acquisition occurring soon. She went on to explain the state funding provided, and how she hoped to get part of the state funds matched to buy the Hellman property. Since there is a deadline to use such funding, Ms. Small said a request for extension may be necessary in order to avoid losing it. There remains the potential for additional funding through other organizations.

Ms. Small stated that there are three big issues that the Conservancy considered for each of the properties. These issues are:

1. What organization will take title of the land?
2. How much cleanup is required, and how much will it cost?
3. Is the appraised value fair and reasonable?

She further explained each of these issues, stating that the level of cleanup required affects their risk assessment, and helps determine the feasibility of each acquisition.

Ms. Small continued on to discuss future development potential for the wetlands. According to her, negotiations have been back and forth for years and no conceptual habitat planning is complete. Mr. Trent asked if this site would be difficult to establish a habitat conservation master plan. Ms. Small stated that this is an already impacted site so master planning is already constrained, and any further development in the area would create additional constraint.

The presentation ended with a question and answer period. Ms. Small was asked what the purpose of saving this land was, considering that so much of the wetlands was lost to development. Janice Dahl explained that what is left of the wetlands is currently used by ocean fishes to spawn and that the remaining land must be saved in order to protect fishes in California, otherwise the species will

be impacted. Mr. Trent stated that there are numerous "coastal ghost towns" in existence because prior battles to save habitats were not as sophisticated. He believes that preservationist have the advantage of learning from past mistakes.

Another question asked how to restore the wetlands. There was not a definite answer to this question, however different examples of restored wetlands were mentioned, including a Seal Beach Navy Weapons Station and Bolsa Chica.

Ms. Small pointed out that the Conservancy worked on Bolsa Chica, and surrounding circumstances in this case will make restoring the land more difficult than the predecessors. Ms. Small was asked if wetlands and oil operations are incompatible. Ms. Small replied that it is conceivable, but opinions vary.

There being no further questions, the meeting was adjourned.

Other Issues

Pam Emerson from the California Coastal Commission will be guest speaker for 3/9/05 meeting.

MEMORANDUM

Date: March 18, 2005

To: Greg Carpenter

From: Mercedes McLemore

Subject: Minutes from March 9, 2005 Los Cerritos Wetlands Meeting

Meeting Notes:

Roll Call: Attendees

City of Long Beach:

Greg Carpenter, Planning Bureau Manager
Mercedes McLemore, Planner

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER—6:00 PM

Review of Minutes from last meeting

Minutes Approved from February 9, 2005

Meeting Open for Public Comments

- CJ Hentzen (Island Village resident) introduced himself, made a brief statement regarding the wetlands. He stated that Bryant, Hellman and Bixby own wetlands. That the community wants quality of life, and compared this time to the Apollo "window of opportunity." He stated that the group inspired him, and that he believes everyone could profit from these lands, including residents.

Meeting Open for Staff Comments

- Future Guest Speakers
 - Angela Reynolds, Community, Environmental, and Advanced Planning Officer
 - Marty Moreno, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works

Speaker Presentation:

Pam Anderson, California Coastal Commission (i.e. "Commission")

Greg Carpenter gave a brief introduction of the guest speaker, introducing the group and explaining its purpose to her. Ms. Anderson explained her role as Senior Supervising Planner for the California Coastal Commission, as well as a brief history of the organization. The Commission started as a vote by the people. They wanted beach access, and to protect the coastal resources of their community. Ms. Anderson stated that it started with a time limit set to establish a plan, and was initiated by the Coastal Act of 1976. According to this act, the job of the Commission was to protect public access, natural resources, public views, and to control development along the coast. Ms. Anderson further explained that according to this act, Commission was given a process by which to operate. This process included a permitting system, and a local coastal plan, for groups like Los Cerritos Wetlands Study Group to work with Staff and determine that projects are applicable and/or compatible to the Local Coastal Plan.

Ms. Anderson said that Long Beach was one of the first jurisdictions to develop and Local Coastal Plan. This plan had a deadline established to develop certain lands. The Commission gave Long Beach six (6) months to annex these sites into the city and determine their status as wetlands. She further explained that the purpose of Local Coastal Plans is to protect wetlands by restricting development. The Los Cerritos Wetlands were considered, and the plan also established areas and consolidated wetlands, while allowing "patches" of development in the wetlands. There was a similar plan for Bolsa Chica, but a lawsuit ensued and the presiding court determined that even these "patches" of land could not be developed.

Ms. Anderson went on to describe how a wetland is identified. She explained that the first step is for the Conservation Core and the Fish and Wildlife Department to find that (1) the land is inundated, (2) there are hydraulic soils present, (3) there is wetland vegetation present. However, the environmental groups disagreed with these findings because seasons can change these factors, causing certain lands to not pass as wetlands, even though they are. Ms. Anderson stated that wetland features adjust during seasonal changes. As a result, Fish and Wildlife concluded that if a site meets one of the three possible findings, then it is a wetland. In order to make any of these findings the land must be surveyed, and even then there may be disagreements because is hard to identify a wetland. She stated that in order for a wetlands to work, there must be sufficient distance between the site and nearby development because so that there is a place for water to drain into the wetland. The Commission follows this definition of a wetland. Ms. Anderson stated that developers typically pay for the surveys, and the agencies review the findings. When asked if there are private consultants that do such surveys, Ms. Anderson stated that there are such consultants. When asked where in the development process does such surveying come in, Ms. Anderson answered that it's hard to tell, since the developer does not know the site's potential without the survey and yet would not be asked to do a survey until a proposal was made. Ms. Anderson mentioned that a developer could survey and apply for a Local Coastal Permit with just a right to buy instead of actual land ownership. She was then asked if the

Commission accepts surveys completed by independent organizations, such as the Los Cerritos Wetlands Study Group, and she stated that mostly large corporations and developers request such surveys. She said that it is possible for an independent group to survey the land, but not without the owner's permission (since these are private lands). The Commission would consider the study and look at it as a party owner-hired. When asked if Los Cerritos has yet been established as wetlands, Anderson said that there are clearly wetlands there but it is unknown how viable the lands are. She explained that there are no "wetland boundaries" established yet for this site. She mentioned that removing wetland vegetation is not permitted, but that the removal of on-site trash is. She further explained that there is a trade-off in developing this land. If some of the land is considered wetlands, then a higher density may be permitted on the upland to avoid a taking.

Ms. Anderson went on to explain the process of obtaining a Local Coastal Permit. She said that for Los Cerritos, a developer would need a zone change because the site is currently not zoned to allow any residential (although commercial use is possible). She said that after the applicant files for the zone change, they would come to the Commission for project review. The Commission would then work closely with the City of Long Beach to review such plans. She stated that the Commission would rather see development plans for a site instead of considering only a conceptual plan or written proposal. For the Los Cerritos Wetlands, difficulty will arise in trying to get a Local Coastal Permit because only portions of the wetlands are in a Local Coastal Plan (SEADIP). Therefore, the "missing pieces" are still under state jurisdiction since our local coastal plan is not certified.

Ms. Anderson then explained the level of review for established wetlands. She stated that if the project site is within 100' from the San Gabriel River (or other wetlands), there can be an appeal for compatibility to the Local Coastal Program. If the project site is considered a wetland, then the Commission has jurisdiction. If outside of the "wetland boundary" (100' or 300'—can't remember) then the city has jurisdiction and appeals go to court. She concluded that if the project site is within 300' from the mean high tide or beach, then the project can be appealed to the Commission. She also mentioned that wetlands can only be removed for (1) incidental public service, (2) boating recreational facilities, or (3) marina facilities.

When told that the Los Cerritos is a wetland because birds use this property, Anderson stated that the Commission could consider that fact, but it is still difficult to determine a wetland boundary when looking at previously disturbed land. She was then asked if the 80% open space requirement in SEADIP was this required b/c we thought only 1/3 of the property was wetlands. Greg Carpenter explained that this open space allowance was intended for walking paths, waterways, and other recreational uses. She was then asked if the Commission has a determination of degraded versus non-degraded wetlands, and she stated that there was no legal distinction between these two. She then explained the difference between the Commission and the Conservancy. She

stated that the Commission regulates land, while the Conservancy can hold title to land. The Commission cannot purchase land, but can restrict development of it and make requirements. She stated that many wetlands have been lost since 1978 (when the act was created) because the definition of a wetland has changed, and some wetlands were not identified as such in the past.

Other Issues

Next meeting is on April 13, 2005. Study group roster will be posted on the website.

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 6, 2005

To: Greg Carpenter

CC: Angela Reynolds

From: Mercedes McLemore,

Subject: Minutes from April 13, 2005 Los Cerritos Wetlands Meeting

Meeting Notes:

Roll Call:

Denis Craig—Island Village HOA
Lisa Rinaldi—Pacific Villas HOA
Sonia Pawluczyk—AHIA
Tom Lockhart—Belmont Shores Mobile Estates
Joan McGrath—Belmont Shores Mobile Estates
Thomas Marchese—University Park Estates
Mike Pugh—College Park Estates
Ric Trent—Save Our Bay/Naples I
Ann Denison—College Park Estates
Mark Bixby—College Park Estates/University Park, guest
Judy Hess—College Park Estates/University Park, guest
Marice White—Government Solutions, guest

City of Long Beach:

Angela Reynolds, Community, Environmental and Advanced Planning
Officer
Mercedes McLemore, Community Planner

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER—6:15 pm

Review of Minutes from last meeting

Minutes Approved from March 9, 2005

Meeting Open for Public Comments

- Janice Dahl discussed a wetlands symposium that she attended in Sacramento, CA for the State Coastal Conservancy. She stated that there was a lobbying day when interested parties and agencies ask that funding be kept for various environmental endeavors. She also noted that

Governor Schwarzenegger is absolutely behind communities saving their wetlands and coasts, but because of budgeting this is difficult. The \$7 million funding for Los Cerritos Wetlands, however, is still available.

Meeting Open for Staff Comments--NONE

Speaker Presentation:

Angela Reynolds, Community, Environmental and Advanced Planning Officer

Ms. Reynolds introduced herself to the group, discussing her position with the City of Long Beach, focusing primarily on her work as an Environmental Planning Officer. Ms. Reynolds handles environmental processes, coordinates documents such as Environmental Impact Reports, Negative Declarations, etc. for projects submitted to the Planning Department in order to determine and mitigate any potentially harmful environmental impacts of such projects. Ms. Reynolds stated that she would give the group a recap of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process. She then distributed two (2) handouts to the group—a print out of her PowerPoint presentation, and a copy of a negative declaration and initial study for review.

Ms. Reynolds opens her discussion by going over the objectives of CEQA. These objectives are as follows:

1. To have a document tell decision makers and public citizens what environmental impacts could come out of discretionary projects. (She described “discretionary projects” as those that require an exercise of judgment and review, therefore not automatically permitted.)
2. To determine mitigation measures to minimize the impacts of such projects
3. To prevent environmental damage.
4. To create a disclosure document
5. To foster, interagency coordination of projects
6. Enhances public participation in the planning process

She went on to explain the three levels on environmental review under CEQA. The levels are: (1) Statutorily Exemption, (2) Categorical Exemption, (3) Negative Declaration, and (4) Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Ms. Reynolds listed building permits, demolition permits, and such as examples of statutorily exempt projects, noting that the majority of projects proposed to the Planning Department are categorically exempt. These “categorically exempt” projects are those that typically have very little (if any) impact on the environment, and therefore do not require much review at all. She went on to explain that there are two kinds of negative declarations. The first is a simple statement that the project has been reviewed and deemed to have little or no negative impact. The second kind is a mitigated negative declaration. This document is an analysis of CEQA, with mitigation measures incorporated so that

the project impact is below a level of significance. Mr. Reynolds then went on to describe that an EIR is done on higher projects, or projects that cannot be mitigated to a level below significance. This is the highest level of review, and takes into consideration the proposed project, as well as four alternatives for the property. She stated that the standard "alternatives" are (1) no project alternative, (2) project underlying zoning, and (3) two additional less-impacting projects.

After discussing the various levels of review under CEQA, Ms. Reynolds went on to explain the role of the Lead Agency. This is the group that has principal responsibility for carrying out a project. The lead agency certifies the Negative Declarations, and Final EIRs, and often hires out consultants to complete EIRs for projects when necessary. She also explained to the study group that when someone wants to put a stop to a project and believes that the EIR content is inadequate, this is where litigation is brought in.

Ms. Reynolds continued her presentation by explaining how to determine the scope of a project that is not exempt. The first step is to complete an initial study that will determine where environmental impacts may occur. She pointed out certain sections of the initial study that are most significant in Long Beach due to the existing conditions within the city. These sections are Biological Resources, Hazards & Hazardous Materials, and Mineral Resources and Hydrology/Water Quality. The Population/Housing and Transportation sections are also important because, despite the city practically being completely built out, the population is growing and all projects cause some increase in traffic. With the additional vehicular traffic often comes concern about air quality, therefore this section is also reviewed carefully. She pointed out that the Cultural Resources section is also of some significance because of the various landmarks and cultural districts throughout the city. Ms. Reynolds said that the next step is the early public and inter-agency consultation phase, where we send out a mailing list to all responsible agencies and neighborhood groups. The next step is to circulate the Notice of Preparation (NOP). This document has a 30-day circulation period, and is mailed to the responsible agencies, groups and whomever else is interested, including property owners within 500' of the project site. Ms. Reynolds pointed out that during this period the lead agency takes public comments. The final step in determining the scope of a project is to have a scoping meeting with agencies and public groups. Comments gathered from the NOP and scoping meeting are added to the EIR and answered during some period of time of this review.

Ms. Reynolds briefly went through the content of an EIR with the group, focusing on the Executive Summary and Project Description, which are most frequently read because it is a condensed version of the actual report. She noted that the project description includes alternatives to the proposed project.

After explaining the CEQA documents and determining the scope of a project, Ms. Reynolds provided the group with a process summary. She explained that

for projects that are not exempt, the first step is the Notice of Preparation, then a Public notice and Draft EIR is available for a 45-day review period. She noted that this review period could legally be extended to 60 days, but that 45 days is standard. After all written comments and emails are received, responses to these comments are prepared and sent to responding agencies. She noted that only specific environmental issues and questions are addressed, and opinions are simply noted. Once this review and response period is complete, the Final EIR goes with project entitlements, such as Conditional Use Permits, Subdivisions, etc. and is reviewed by Planning Commission. At that point, Planning Commission will certify the EIR or send it back for corrections. Lastly, a Notice of Determination is posted 5 days from the approval/certification and the public has 30 days to challenge the adequacy of it. If not posted within the 5-day period, this "challenge period" is extended to 180 days. Ms. Reynolds finished her presentation by stating that the Planning Commission determines that the EIR is adequate when all environmental impacts have been fully analyzed. At that point, the discretionary permit is decided upon, and the EIR is deemed adequate when it is certified.

After Ms. Reynolds' presentation was completed, the group had the opportunity to ask her questions. She was first asked how the purposes of an EIR are carried out. She replied that project opponents are given the opportunity to comment on environmental impacts of a project. She went on to explain that during the review period, concerns are allowed to be aired, and issues will get placed in the EIR and analyzed based on threshold numbers and criteria. She was then asked what is the typical time period between the 45-day review period and the 5-day notice of determination deadline. According to Ms. Reynolds, this depends on the number of comments submitted. There isn't a prescribed time, per se, other than the time period of review itself. If there are not allot of comments, then the period between public comments and NOD is short, otherwise it can be very long.

The next guest speaker was Marty Moreno, from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works. Mr. Moreno works in the Department of Public Works Watershed Management Division, and came to discuss the San Gabriel River (SGR) Master Plan. Upon introducing himself, Mr. Moreno focused his discussion on the watershed. He explained that the drainage area of the watershed is approximately 640 square miles, and includes various tributaries. He also stated that there are different characteristics of the watershed, depending on location/region. The SGR consists of a mountain region, valley region, and coastal plan region. According to Mr. Moreno, there are different perspectives and differing opportunities depending on which regions one were to consider. The SGR unites 19 communities as far north as Arcadia, and south as Long Beach.

Mr. Moreno went on to explain the actual Master Plan. He stated that a Planning Team, which included the Local Agency Formation Committee (LAFCO), Rivers and Mountain Conservancy, and National Park Service, did the scope of the

Master Plan. He went on to explain that the Master Plan was focused on the San Gabriel Corridor. It is stakeholder-driven, meaning that the community was asked to help the team compose a vision of what the river could be. Mr. Moreno also mentioned that the Master Plan was consensus-based, so conflicting interest and multiple objectives were worked through to hammer out impeding issues.

According to Mr. Moreno, the vision of the SGRMP was for the SGR to be a corridor of an integrated watershed system while providing protection, benefit and enjoyment to the public. The goal of this master plan is to create natural habitats, recreational facilities, open space, flood protection, water quality and supply. The Planning Team used two methods for achieving these goals. The first was to conduct hands-on forums to create a mosaic of visions for the SGR. The second method was to hold individual stakeholder interviews.

Mr. Moreno stated that the finishing product includes 134 corridor projects, connections to adjacent projects, five concept design studies (with hypothetical cases), funding strategies, design guidelines/standards for the SGR, and the EIR. He went on to list the various projects included in the master plan. These projects include 28 parks, 27 trail enhancements, 26 bridges, gateways and connections, 8 habitat enhancements, and 4 educational centers. Mr. Moreno also discussed the concept design studies, which included a San Gabriel Canyon spreading ground at the mouth of the canyon, Woodland Duck Farm, SGR Discover Center, Lazario Creek, and El Dorado Regional Park Nature Center. He went on to go through a timeline for the master plan, notifying the group that it should be complete in September of this year.

Following Mr. Moreno's presentation, there was a question and answer period. He was first asked if he could recall any input about the Los Cerritos Wetlands during the SGRMP planning process. Mr. Moreno stated that there wasn't, because L.A. County allows cities push their projects as individual proponents. He also stated that there are often generic conversations about potential development in wetlands, however the Los Cerritos Wetlands were not really considered in this process. Next, Mr. Moreno was asked to comment on whether Los Cerritos could be a habitat, treatment wetlands, etc. He stated that he doesn't have enough biographical information to determine that right now, but it could be considered during the feasibility analysis of the land. Mr. Moreno was then asked if the master plan addresses how the municipalities will maintain the Los Cerritos Wetlands. He responded that this has always been an issue, and that other agencies claim their hands are tied in terms of doing too much about maintaining these properties, and that legislation would probably be necessary to determine what to do. Mr. Moreno can be contacted at (626) 458-4119, or mmoreno@ladpw.org. The master plan information is available at www.sangabrielriver.com or the link from www.ladpw.org.

Other Issues

Next meeting is on May 11, 2005. At this meeting, there will be a presentation regarding the proposed Home Depot store on Studebaker Road.

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 25, 2005

To: Greg Carpenter

CC: Angela Reynolds, Craig Chalfant

From: Mercedes McLemore

Subject: Minutes from May 11, 2005 Los Cerritos Wetlands Meeting

Roll Call:

Attendees

City of Long Beach:

Greg Carpenter
Angela Reynolds
Craig Chalfant,
Mercedes McLemore

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER—6:15 pm

Review of Minutes from last meeting

Minutes Approved from April 13, 2005

Public Comments— Curtailed until June Meeting

Meeting Open for Staff Comments--NONE

Speaker Presentation:

Greg Carpenter provided the study group with an outline of the meeting agenda. The meeting would open with him summarizing the requested entitlements for the proposed Home Depot shopping center. Next, Angela Reynolds would discuss the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and answer any questions. And the Home Depot team would explain specific elements of the project and answer any questions.

Mr. Carpenter identified the project location as the point where the terminus of Loynes Drive and Studebaker meet. The site was originally used for oil tanks, and currently still serves as a power plant. The site is currently designated as General Industrial, and is part of SEADIP planning area. Therefore, a

Conditional Use Permit (CUP) is required for the proposed commercial uses, in addition to Site Plan Review (SPR) and variance for a shortage of landscaping. Mr. Carpenter further explained the landscaping issue by stating that SEADIP requires 30% open space, and the applicant only provides 22%. The SEADIP design theme was intended to promote bikeways, walkways, and other usable open space. Due to the scale of the project, an EIR is required. Mr. Carpenter assured the group that there will be ample opportunity for the public to comment because such an extensive review and hearing process is required.

Ms. Reynolds introduced herself to the group as the Environmental Planning Officer, and moved on to talk about the EIR. The City issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) about a year ago when Home Depot came to the city as an applicant. She explained that the NOP, which is required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), was mailed to all neighborhood associations with a 30-day review period for comments. There was a scoping meeting at Kettering Elementary School where residents complained that the review period was not long enough. Therefore, a two-week extension was granted, and several hundreds more comments were submitted about the initial study. Ms. Reynolds stated that the environmental consultant then wrote a draft EIR based on these comments, which is currently in circulation. This draft EIR has been sent to Air Quality Management District (AQMD), Los Angeles County Public Works (LACPW), various neighborhood groups, and anyone who attended the scoping meeting and signed in. In total, approximately 300 notices were sent to inform people of the EIR availability. Ms. Reynolds said that it can be bought for \$40 (the reproduction cost only), and is also available online and at the local libraries. The official comment/review period began May 2, and will run until June 15. She said that comments could also be mailed to her directly at Angela_Reynolds@longbeach.gov. After the 45-day review period, there will be a "response to comments" period. Ms. Reynolds noted that any comments collected at this particular meeting would not be recorded, because comments need to be submitted in writing. There will be a Planning Commission study session on May 19, 2005 at 12:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Ms. Reynolds stated that at this session she would further describe the project and, as well as any impacts that are significant, need to be mitigated, and cannot be mitigated. The Planning Commission will hear public comments, but these will only be documented if in writing. She went on to say that the City will accept all public comments, but respond only to the germane ones. If someone simply wants to voice their opinion regarding the project, it will be noted but not responded to in the Final EIR. Ms. Reynolds said that the Final EIR has a "Respond to Comments" section. The final EIR goes to the Planning Commission simultaneously with the entitlements (CUP, SPR, etc.) Upon hearing the EIR is certified, or not, depending on the Commission finding it acceptable. She said that after the EIR certification, the Commission will act on the entitlements. The City has roughly 6-8 weeks to respond to comments, but this time period varies depending on the amount of comments submitted. She told the group that a late August hearing date is predicted, but not guaranteed. However, notice of this meeting will be sent to anyone who submitted comments, and/or attended the

scoping meeting. Ms. Reynolds went on to discuss the appeal process. After the Planning Commission meets and makes a determination, one can appeal to the City Council within 10 days of the Planning Commission hearing. Such appeals are free of charge. Mr. Carpenter then added that due to the project site's close proximity to waterways, it is also appealable to the California Coastal Commission. However, an appeal of that sort has to be relative to the project being consistent/inconsistent with the Local Coastal Plan. The City contracted with a firm called LSA to complete the EIR. Ms. Reynolds then introduced the group to Craig Chalfant, who is the Environmental Planner assigned to work with LSA on this project. When asked if the applicant had purchased the property, she responded yes. Ms. Reynolds then suggested that the group read the Executive Summary to see what impacts were found, and which ones cannot be mitigated below the threshold of significance. In this case, the Home Depot project has such impacts to areas such as air quality and traffic (to name a couple). Ms. Reynolds pointed out that the EIR is a disclosure document only, and ultimately goes to the a deciding body. After reading it, the deciding body will determine its adequacy, and whether the benefits of the project will outweigh its burdens. If so then there will be a Statement of Overriding Considerations (SOC), or exception for the project, is made. According to Ms. Reynolds, several SOCs are required based on the finding of the Home Depot Project.

The next speaker was Marice (pronounced Mair-is) White, from Government Solutions. She introduced herself, as well as Stephanie Kyle, who is also from Government Solutions. Ms. White gave a PowerPoint presentation, and started by giving a summary of what is being proposed. According to Marice, the project site is 16.7 acres, possibly larger if one were to count the tank that will remain. The proposed project includes a Home Depot that is 140,000 square feet (30,000 square feet of which is the garden center), a restaurant, and neighborhood retail. Ms. White went on to show the group elevations of the proposed Home Depot, and stated that it will be conditioned not to allow any outdoor sales. After showing the site plan to the study group, she noted that it was a slightly revised site plan from the one originally submitted, and that it had not been studied from an EIR standpoint. In the revised plans, some of the retail originally proposed has been removed, and some repositioned. Ms. White stated that the site plan shown was not a final design, and that there were still other possibilities. Next, she described the proposed Home Depot as being more of a "design center," i.e. "hybrid" product type of store. It has been designed to attract interior designers more so than contractors, and so there are various product displays rather than the typical warehouse appearance that Home Depot usually has. According to Ms. White, the center will have a wetlands theme in the landscaping with native vegetation, an outdoor dining area, and a walking path along Studebaker.

After briefing the group on the details of the project, Ms. White began listing the benefits per PowerPoint presentation. They include the following:

- It will clean up an unsightly area by offering landscaping and architectural treatments;

- The area will have more amenities, such as dining and neighborhood services;
- It will cause an increase in sales tax to the City of Long Beach;
- It will cause an increase in tax revenue to the local schools;
- It meets the local demand for a closer home improvement and design center.

Next, Ms. White went on to describe the outstanding issues addressed in the EIR, beginning with the shortage of open space proposed. She opened by pointing out that the proposed Home Depot is the first project in SEADIP that is being held to the 30% standard. She also pointed out that the applicant has spent the last year trying to come up with alternative designs that would meet this standard. The solution that they thought of was to acquire the vacant parcel near 7th Street and Kettering. On this parcel, they are proposing providing a link to the existing trail at the Los Cerritos Channel, as well as a landscape buffer between 7th Street and Kettering School.

The next issue that she addressed was Traffic. Ms. White said that all project-impacted intersections can be mitigated for *weekday* conditions, but the Studebaker/22 westbound ramp cannot be mitigated at all. As for the Pacific Coast Highway (PCH)/2nd Street and PCH/7th Street intersections, these will be impacted on the weekends but not significantly. She told the group that the applicant plans to work with the City and CalTrans for traffic signal coordination. And although not mentioned in the EIR, studies show an expected improvement of 3-5%, thus mitigating the project impact on weekend traffic. Ms. White went on to site page 4.11-24 of the EIR, which says the following:

"It should be noted that project-impacted intersection analyzed under the Intersection Capacity Utilization (ICU) methodology operate at acceptable Levels of Service (LOS) using Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) methodology...project-impacted intersections would operate at satisfactory levels of service."

After citing this section, she commented that the second methodology yields different results than the first, but that the wait time is only greater by a few seconds. She also discussed the issue of cut-thru traffic, citing the EIR, which points out that this is not anticipated to be a problem (as is suspected by University Park Estates residents).

For the remaining issues, Ms. White stated the following:

- *Air Quality*—Basin is at a non-attainment status year round. All considered projects subject to environmental review would require the SOC, but the retail proposed is probably safer than the tanks.

- *Hazardous Materials*—After rough grading, a detailed soil investigation report is required by the City. Based on these results the applicant will agree to additional mitigation measures for handling on-site methane.
- *Noise*—The noise levels are expected to be lower than existing ambient noise; therefore Home Depot will not cause a significant impact. A 6' high plexiglass screen for sound attenuation will surround the outdoor eating area.
- *Light and Glare*—The impact will be less than significant.
- *Biological Resources*—There are no sensitive plant or wildlife species identified on site. The burrowing owl visits seasonally; therefore the impact will not be significant. The project will not impact the Los Cerritos Wetlands because of separation caused by a major arterial (Studebaker).
- *Land Use*—The project is compatible with the City's Strategic 2010 plan.

Ms. White concluded her presentation by stated that Home Depot (the company) has shown support of the Long Beach community in the past by partnering Team Depot with the local Habitat for Humanity program, and with the Associate Volunteer Program. Home Depot has also partnered with the Long Beach Parks and Recreation Department and Los Angeles Angels to sponsor the local Little Leagues. Ms. White can be contacted at (949) 717-7941, and at Marice@govsol.com. The meeting was then opened for comments and questions.

Ms. White was asked if the proposed store was more like Expo, rather than Home Depot. She responded that it was a "hybrid" Home Depot that does not cater exclusively to the contractor clientele; a good example is the Brea location. She then stated that she would be willing to arrange a bus tour for those that were interested in seeing a model. Next, she was asked why the leverage was placed on the applicant to get CalTrans to coordinate traffic lighting when Long Beach Traffic Department seemed to envision this task as an impossible feat? She responded that private industry has more time to dedicate to this task, and are willing to pay for whatever they want to achieve. The next person stated that the Traffic Study gives the impression that due to the bridges, it is difficult to make any significant changes to the traffic flow (i.e. you cannot widen bridges). Ms. White said that CalTrans does not monitor the signals; they simply allow PCH traffic to free flow. While the bridge connections aspect may not change, there is room for improvement in terms of lighting signals. She went on to say that even 1% of improvement is a huge amount of change in traffic. CalTrans is in support of traffic improvements, but the bigger issue is who will pay for them. Projects as small as the proposed one are typically not on the CalTrans capital improvements list. Next, Ms. White was asked why there is an EIR, and yet other problems projected by the applicant that had not been included. She responded that this is the purpose of the comments period, and oftentimes these documents are very conservative in how the review is prepared. Angela Reynolds stepped in and said that all assumptions made by the City are conservative because we don't want to be overly lenient. Ms. Reynolds was then

asked who determines the levels of significance and/or insignificance. She responded that there are thresholds for each category of concern. These thresholds are found within the CEQA guidelines, and the City may occasionally add to it. Based on the studies, these impacts can be either at threshold, below, or above it (which would be where mitigation requirements are introduced). The next question was whether comments would be grouped in the EIR. Ms. Reynolds said that comments are typically grouped together when there are lots of them. However, the City prefers to make sure that each comment is individually responded to, and then group them in the EIR based on topic. Next, it was requested that any comments regarding the Los Cerritos Wetlands be grouped separately. Ms. Reynolds obliged. Next, someone commented that the cut-thru traffic conclusion was questionable; the same thing was said before and University Park Estates residents had to fix the problem. In response, Ms. Reynolds pointed out that we did not do a qualitative traffic study, only quantitative. If someone wants to dispute this conclusion, we will be happy to address it in the final EIR. Marice White was then asked if the EIR includes any mention of the proposed Seaport Marina project. She responded that it did not, only because the NOP was prepared before that project was a consideration. Next, Ms. White was asked to clarify the location of the pathways, and if there was any thought made to extending the trail south onto 2nd Street. Since Island Village is completely isolated, it would be nice to include pathways so that the residents would have pedestrian access into the community. Ms. White said that there would be a sidewalk added to the bridge on Loynes, and there was still the vacant property that may be used to add to the landscaping requirement. She also pointed out that if more of the retail space was removed the landscaping requirement would be met. However, if that is taken out the walking paths and pedestrian-friendly features would also be removed. Lastly, Ms. White was told that the corner of 7th Street and Studebaker is already impacted; and now that the nearby church has acquired more land traffic on Sundays would only get worse. She responded by saying that the peak times for Home Depot are from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The discussion closed with Ric Trent thanking the guest speakers, and reminding the group that they are coming to the end of their “wish list.” He went on to say that if there is anything else that the group would like to know about, or any other areas of interest, please bring it up at next month’s meeting.

Other Issues

- Next meeting Date is June 8, 2005.
- Possible Guests—
 - Department of Water and Power
 - General Plan Update discussion, focusing on this area

Meeting Adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 14, 2005

To: Greg Carpenter

From: Mercedes McLemore

Subject: Minutes from July 13, 2005 LCWSG Meeting

Roll Call:

Tom Lockhart, Belmont Shores Mobile Estates
Hank Snapper, Spinnaker Bay HOA
Mike Pugh, College Estates
Dave Bates, Island Village HOA
Denis Craig, Island Village HOA
Lisa Rinaldi, Pacific Villas HOA
Thomas Marchese, University Park Estates
Ann Dennison, College Estates
Ric Trent, Save Our Bay
Janice Dahl, University Park Estates

City of Long Beach:

Greg Carpenter
Mercedes McLemore

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER—6:10 p.m.

Public Comments

CJ Hentzen from Island Village asked to speak. He stated that the people who make up the study group are his neighbors and he loves them. He also stated that the wetlands as they stand today are not an eye soar, and he wishes that the site would simply stay the way that it is because there is no need to make any changes.

Meeting Open for Staff Comments--NONE

Speaker Presentation:

Greg Carpenter opened the discussion by introducing the Los Cerritos Wetlands Study Group and explaining its purpose. He explained that the study group reviews various proposals for the wetlands area, considers the numerous factors (ex. Traffic) surrounding the area, and works to increase their awareness of wetlands preservation. It was decided that the community should weigh in on

what should be developed, saved, etc. in the area before bringing any more major development to the community. The study group members have been meeting for the past 8-9 months to educate themselves on the background information that is necessary to determine what would best fit in the community. The group will eventually cause changes in SEADIP to modify it and make it more suitable, considering factors that specifically affect the area.

Mr. Carpenter then introduced Tanya Bonfiglio, Chuck Holloway, and Sara Easley Perez, the guest speakers, to the study group. All three speakers work for the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP), and are responsible for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation of the agency's documents. Ms. Bonfiglio explained that the purpose of her presentation was to discuss the Haynes project, give an idea of the current operations on site, and get the group a bit more familiar with the site.

Ms. Bonfiglio opened her presentation by giving a few brief facts about the Haynes Power Plant site. It consists of 122 acres total, the majority of which is located within the Long Beach city boundary. 7.5 acres of the site is located in Seal Beach. The site of the Haynes plant was purchased by LADWP to replace the Seal Beach steam plant years ago. She stated that the Seal Beach plant was demolished in 1967, but that the site has since been sold back to the city of Seal Beach. Ms. Bonfiglio also showed the group a photograph of the Seal Beach site prior to the demolition. She stated that the land was dedicated in 1963 and named after Dr. John Randolph Haynes. The site was originally designed to have six (6) units; the last unit was built in 1967. But since then, some modernization efforts have taken place. According to Ms. Bonfiglio, three (3) new units have been installed, and two (2) have been taken out of service. She stated that we get power from as far North as Oregon and Utah, and this power is transferred to the Los Angeles (LA) area. Next, she showed the group a map of the four (4) generating stations, which are in-basin power plants. These are the Sun Valley Generating Station, Scattergood Generating Station (just west of El Segundo), the Harbor Generating Station (Wilmington area), and the Haynes Generating Facility. Ms. Bonfiglio stated that most of the energy imported to the City comes from the North, and so Haynes often acts as a backup facility. According to her, Haynes is the largest generating station, and gives off enough energy for approximately 1.5 million people. It has a 1619-megawatt capacity, but is not often operating to its full capacity. Ms. Bonfiglio then said that she does not know how a power plant ended up at this location, only that it was intended to replace the Seal Beach Plant. She also noted that she was not sure why the Seal Beach plant had existed in its location.

Ms. Bonfiglio went on to explain that the cooling water comes from the intake structure Schooner or Later. This water goes from the San Gabriel (SG) River into the circulating channel and then into the Haynes Power Plant. This keeps the water from stagnating in the waters of Naples. Instead, the water gets sucked out of Alamitos Bay and gets discharged elsewhere, never returning. Chairman Ric Trent notes that this is one of the reasons for "ray bay," the water

is always warm in that area. Ms. Bonfiglio continued showing the group various photos of the Haynes site from various angles, the SG River, and the AES facility.

Next, Ms. Bonfiglio told the group that LADWP was in the process of modernizing the facility by replacing inefficient units with more efficient technology. Units 8, 9, and 10 are examples of such technology. She stated that some units are being replaced, and that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be circulated for public review regarding this project. If anyone is interested, simply let her know and she will provide notice that it is available for viewing. She was then asked if the new plants are more "on-demand" plants, and so steam would have to be generated from one in order for the other ones to work. Chuck Holloway described the plant as a "spinning reserve." This means that even when the other units are working, some still need to keep spinning because it would take too long to get them revved up in case of backup. Mr. Holloway also stated that Unit One is probably one of the cleaner burning units that exist amongst the older ones. Unassociated with future modernization, there are still going to be sound barriers in front of Unit One in order to avoid excess noise. Mr. Holloway was then asked what the cost is associated with making Unit Six equal to Unit One. He responded that there would be a public meeting to discuss re-powering issues with the plant where questions such as that one would be discussed. The tentative date for this meeting is August 16, 2005. A member of the study group told the speakers that as LADWP brings more development into the city, they are also bringing more noise and nuisance. Another member of the group also stated that the guest speakers were not really answering questions, and that LADWP is not trying to be better neighbors, and is actually at the base of several problems. Mr. Holloway stated that Unit Six was a dirty unit, and he was then told that LADWP should have spent money cleaning the unit rather than the modernization efforts that are proposed now. The Chairman suggested that we continue on with the presentation, and that any specific issues or questions such as these should be addressed at the meeting on August 16. He encouraged everyone who has concerns to attend this meeting. Ms. Bonfiglio added that there will also be a circulation period for the EIR, and that people with concerns should submit written comments. A study group member stated that even with written comments, LADWP would follow through with its plans and ignore the community members. He also stated that noise vibrations come through the walls of Island Village, that it is an incredible nuisance, and they the residents should have been noticed a long time ago. It was also noted that there are similar issues in University Park due to the AES Plant. With respect to this plant, there has been an inordinate amount of smoke and smell. When people ask about environmental concerns regarding these sites, no one seems to have answers. Some of the residents believe that these issues have been "painted over" and they are being told the sites are clean without any real consideration. Ms. Bonfiglio stated that when the EIR is posted there would be a Notice of Availability (NOA) distributed listed the various meeting dates. This information will also be available on the LCW website.

Ms. Bonfiglio was then told that one way to mitigate costs was to add sidewalks, medians, etc., and asked if she knew anything about this. She stated that she was aware of some proposed improvements to traffic flow on Second Street and noise barriers, but that was all. Apparently the Superintendent is looking into various methods of improving the facility, but the primary responsibility is for modernization efforts. She was then asked where the project would go once the CEQA process is complete. She responded that she has received comments regarding the Notice of Preparation (NOP), and these are being addressed. She also emphasized that the August 16th meeting is not a scoping meeting, it is simply a community meeting. She then told the group that LADWP is the Lead Agency, and that the board meeting is considered their form of public hearing. So the board can certify the Final EIR, and there is a thirty (30)-day Statute of Limitations to file a lawsuit. She also informed the group that there are exemptions in law for power generating facilities, and so zoning compliance is not required. Outside of consideration from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and Air Quality Management District (AQMD), there is no other review. When asked if she has addressed the issue of less water being circulated through the Alamitos Bay Area, Ms. Bonfiglio stated that this issue would be addressed in the EIR and is being discussed with the RWQCB.

Ms. Bonfiglio then discussed the land owned by the Bixby Ranch Company. She stated that there will be some exploratory drilling on that site, and a well will be installed to see if there is a viable project possible on the site. However, this is an operation occurring on site that is completely separate from any LADWP activity. The Long Beach Desalination Pileup project will be located in the area, and will hopefully be operative in spring of 2006.

Following the presentation, the question and answer portion of the meeting began. Ms. Bonfiglio was first asked what the long-term outlook was for the remainder of the site. She responded that no plans are proposed at this time. The next question was what the tanks were originally used for. She said they were intended to hold fuel oil, but that the whole plant operates on natural gas now. When asked what the tank is currently holding, Ms. Bonfiglio responded that it would hold low sulfur diesel fuel as backup but that no additional tanks are proposed.

After the visitors left, the second scheduled discussion began regarding the proposed Home Depot. Ric Trent stated that there was going to be a brief discussion regarding the process of the study group, more so than the actual Home Depot EIR. He continued on to say that he does not want the committee to break off and not complete what it was comprised to do. Greg Carpenter was in attendance to address the June meeting cancellation. Mr. Carpenter began by apologizing to the group, stating that we apparently created a larger problem than we intended to. Next, he explained that we were unable to secure a guest speaker after finding that the LADWP presentation would not be until July. Mr. Carpenter explained that he cancelled the meeting, but later got word that there would be an ad hoc meeting amongst the study group members to compose a

statement regarding the Home Depot EIR instead. Mr. Trent stressed that based on the deadline fast approaching; he felt that a meeting was necessary. He then clarified that the study group does not fall under the Brown Act, and therefore the 72-hour rule does not apply. There were 9-10 people present, and they met at the adjacent park instead of the Councilman's field office (the usual meeting place). Mr. Trent stated that this was a "single-issue" meeting, and based on the approaching deadline a decision had to be made regarding what comments would be submitted for the EIR. At the meeting, a draft comment was composed that was to be delivered to Angela Reynolds in the Planning Department. In order to make sure that this was not a "rump committee" that was present, he compared the response list with the official roster of the study group to ensure that the comment was legitimate. Mr. Trent then passed a file out to everyone that included the correspondence that took place that day. This file included emails, a list of official study group members and alternates, etc. He went on to explain the complaint that was filed by member Hank Snapper regarding the ad hoc meeting that was arranged. Everyone took a moment to review the letters and complaints before having an open discussion regarding group protocol. Mr. Trent added that there needed to be a discussion regarding the "alternate rule" for the group.

Next, Hank Snapper took the floor to explain his reasons for submitting a complaint to the Planning Department. He began by stating that he was a little disappointed to have missed a meeting, but was extremely disappointed when he found out that the "most important decision of the year was made in such an informal way." Mr. Snapper does not feel that the Home Depot is even a wetlands issue. He added that at the time of the "private meeting," there was still sufficient time to compose a statement for the EIR at another scheduled meeting time with proper notice. Mr. Snapper had already spoken with Mr. Trent regarding the results of the group. He claims that he was encouraged because he had been informed that the group would not hold a conclusive opinion, but would only discuss the pros and cons of the development. Mr. Snapper concluded that once he read the group's submittal, he felt that he had been had.

After Mr. Snapper finished speaking, various responses came from the other group members. The first response was that it is understandable how Mr. Snapper could have felt blind-sighted, because he hadn't found out about the ad hoc meeting until the following day. However, this group member did not feel that anything was written in the comment that had not already been discussed in previous meetings. The purpose of the comment submittal was only to reserve the group's right to make comments later. Mr. Trent wanted to voice some concern regarding the project, but that it was not of such great importance, as Mr. Snapper had believed. Mr. Snapper was then reminded that there may be opposing opinions within the group, but no one was trying to do anything behind his back. The original meeting was not called off due to a secret agenda, and they still wanted Mr. Snapper to participate in the group.

Another group member stated that they had a mixed feeling upon finding out about the ad hoc meeting, because of the confusion that was caused by canceling and then rescheduling. They added that emailing is not the best method of noticing, and that it seemed that the process broke down at that point.

Mr. Trent stated that his concern was that this is not a Brown Act group. So yes, the meeting was called off and then on hastily, but it does not really matter. Not much time was left to get a comment submitted because it required time to compose, and Mr. Snapper was out of town. Janice Dahl picked up where Mr. Trent left off to say that such a comment was necessary in order to get a "placeholder" within the EIR. The day of the original meeting was one time that they knew all the members should be available. And even with that meeting, there was just enough time following it for everyone to review the statement and sign it.

Next, Mr. Carpenter clarified that the deadline was for comments that people wanted responses to in the Final EIR.

Mr. Trent stated that there were three major points he wanted to make to the group regarding the ad hoc meeting, and they are as follows:

Point 1: He feels that it is a great misuse to take a position as the group's take, if in fact, it is not. He is willing to resign if the group feels that he overstepped his position as Chairman.

Point 2: How the Alternate system works. There is an official roster of study group members and designated alternates. Anyone who is not a member or alternate should not be included in their process, nor should their comments be considered at all. Everyone needs to understand that they are not to speak for the group with a statement that the group itself did not conclude to.

Point 3: Guidelines for scheduling/rescheduling meetings and noticing group members.

A motion was made that Mr. Trent properly represented the group in the comment submitted for the EIR, and then seconded. Another motion was also made that the original committee can only be modified with the group's approval. Therefore, any motions or votes made by alternates are to be under the actual committee member's name. Mr. Trent stressed that it is very important that such alternates attend the meetings; absences and replacements are justified only due to catastrophic circumstances. This motion carried unanimously. And finally, a motion was made for the College Park Estates alternate to be changed from Mike Filipow to Ann Dennison. This motion was seconded and carried. Ms. Dahl corrected the group roster, stating that Ben Goldberg is no longer the representative from University Park Estates Neighborhood Association (UPNA) and she is his replacement. She also motioned that the new alternate for UPNA is Tom Marchese instead of her. This motion was carried unanimously as well.

In terms of rescheduling, one group member recommended that 24-48 hours notice is sufficient. A motion was made that if notice is given more than 48 hours in advance, email is sufficient. If notice is given 24-48 hours in advance, dual notice (email and phone calls) is required. If less time is available, the meeting shall be had. This motion carried unanimously. Mr. Trent said that Mr. Carpenter and himself would go through the original guidelines of the group and make sure that it sufficiently describes its purpose. He wants to make sure that as advocates of their individual associations, the members represent the input received from their neighbors.

Mr. Trent closed the meeting reiterating that he did not want anyone to leave the meeting feeling animosity. He has neither anger nor resentment towards anyone for voicing his or her opinions. The disagreement is to be placed behind them, and they will move forward to reach the ultimate goal of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Study Group.

Other Issues

- Next meeting Date is August 10, 2005

Meeting Adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

MEMORANDUM

Date: August 15, 2005

To: Greg Carpenter

From: Mercedes McLemore

Subject: Minutes from August 10, 2005 LCWSG Meeting

Roll Call:

Sonia Pawluczyk, Alamitos Heights Improvement Association
Joan McGrath, Belmont Shores Mobile Estates
Thomas Marchese, UPENA
Sam Smock, Pacific Villas HOA
Lisa Rinaldi, Pacific Villas HOA
Denis Craig, Island Village
Ann Denison, College Park Estates
Mike Pugh, College Park Estates
Janice Dahl, UPENA
(Chairman) Ric Trent, Save Our Bay

City of Long Beach:

Greg Carpenter
Mercedes McLemore

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER—6:05 p.m.

Public Comments

CJ Hentzen from Island Village asked to speak. He stated that City of Long Beach acts poor, but is not. He believes that it would be nice to have a Home Depot, because he shops there all the time. However, he does not feel that the proposed store is a good plan. We do not need a shopping center, because there are already four (4) within a half mile. He reiterated that he is just an observer, not a study group member nor naturalist. But he looks at Huntington Beach and other places, wondering why we can't have that type of atmosphere here in Long Beach. He thinks the city can do better, and this whole issue weighs on the City planners and other departments. He is tired of hearing that we need money, and believes that we need to learn how to develop low land restoration instead. The residents are going to lose by being congested and burdened, while the City of Long Beach and developers will benefit.

Meeting Open for Staff Comments—NONE

Speaker Presentation:

Chairman Ric Trent opened the discussion by introducing the guest speaker, Don May of Earth Corps, to the study group. He then reminded the group that the presentation would go first, with questions following. Mr. May opened his presentation by explaining the purpose of his organization to the group, and starting a PowerPoint presentation. Earth Corps is a 501C nonprofit organization that does lots of work in wetlands restoration. It was originally part of the Sierra Club, and later broke away to become a separate organization. Earth Corps is still involved in restoration work and other things worldwide. It has looked at toxic emissions and various other environmental issues. According to Mr. May, Earth Corps has been involved in such issues since the 1960s in both Long Beach and Orange County ever since.

Mr. May stated that the wetlands are an important area because it is a gateway to the San Gabriel Watershed. The estuary is a critical foundation for restoration. This is considered a scenic watershed, and so it is eligible for lots of restoration funding. He showed the group a map of the wetlands area, including the Edison right-of-way, El Dorado, Los Alamitos Corridor, Coyote Creek, Los Cerritos Estuary, Rossmore Retention Basin, etc. Mr. May told the group that the wetlands are also used by lots of "little critters." He stated that if the estuary is to be restored, one should start at the beginning (or mouth) of the San Gabriel River. According to Mr. May, the U.S. has lost half of its wetlands, California has lost 95%, and Long Beach has lost approximately 99.3% of the wetlands. Of 6500 acres that used to exist, only 45 remain. There are several factors that contributed to this phenomenon. Mr. May showed the group a slide that listed some of these factors.

He went on to show the group a photo of the three "prime properties" in the Los Cerritos Wetlands. According to him, the Bryant property is most important, and has the least remediation problems. There is very little contamination on that property, and the Land Trust is currently handling the acquisition of this property.

Next, Mr. May showed the group a picture of some degraded wetland on the Bixby property. He told the group that on this site, there are alternating layers of old sulfinated asphalt. He went on to show the group a photo of the Hellman property. There are dredge spoils from the San Gabriel River and Los Alamitos spread all over this property. Mr. May said that a good part that restoration expense would be the disposal of these spoils.

Mr. May told the group that Earth Corps completed a study on the wetlands, and he brought hard copies as well as CD ROMs. The study was completed in engineer's terms to figure out what all needed to be done for restoration, and to estimate a "restoration price tag." He informed the group that this study has aerial photographs of the area, and are very detailed. Most of the wetlands are in a liquefaction zone, so it would be difficult to construction permanent structures in

that area. Mr. May informed the group that within the report there is a description of the restoration potential for the area, a hydraulic model for full tidal condition, a grading plan, and phasing of restoration.

Mr. May went on to tell the group that oil production in the Studebaker/2nd Street area is currently deed restricted, but they have a right to complete oil production for the next fifteen (15) years after which it can be sold/transferred/etc. There is a burn dump nearby, which is very problematic because these are used for burning waste. He informed the group that there was also lots of municipal rubble, and another burn site nearby that has caused difficulties in Seal Beach. He then pointed out the SEADIP line and portion of the wetlands that are within the City of Long Beach boundary. Mr. May noted that this land meets both state and federal criteria to be deemed a wetland. Nutritious

Mr. May was asked if Earth Corps had any involvement in the land located on the Northeast corner of Studebaker and Second Street. He responded yes, and briefly explained the History of the litigation with Southern California Edison relative to this property.

Next, Mr. May was asked if, in his pursuit of funding, he had been approached to sell off bits and pieces that would allow better access from Second Street onto Studebaker. This study group member explained that this was a claim made by a developer to the study group in a prior meeting, and he just wanted confirmation. Mr. May responded that this was the first time he had heard of this proposal.

The presentation continued with Mr. May showing the group Phase I of the Bryant restoration. He stated that the biggest problem faced thus far has been removing the levees, which belong to the Corps of Engineers. He told the group an estimated cost for restoring this area, as well as the cost for the other two phases of this property, which is roughly \$75million. The other side of the wetlands consists of problematic land as well. On the Hellman property, there is oil residual found. On the Bixby side of the wetlands, Mr. May told the group that Marina Shores is proposing a Best Buy as well as a Whole Foods store. When asked if he knew the status of this proposal, Greg Carpenter informed the group that the applicant is currently handling wetlands issues. Mr. May stated that if the property cannot be acquired, the back half might still be.

He went on to describe the western wetlands, which he said biologically is very important as a mixing zone. Mr. May informed the group that the most interesting things happen at the intersection of fresh and salt water. Locations such as these support a very large diversity of plants and animals. Mr. May then told the group that from Phase I to Phase II, the problems are minimal. From Phase II to Phase II remediation will be most difficult, because there are five (5) burn dumps and thus, the highest cost of remediation. Mr. May was not specific, but mentioned that there are problems in the Belmont Shore Mobile Home Estates, on Loynes, and even branching out into the Homes adjacent to this

area. He said that between Loynes and the channel here are uses that some people have voiced interest in purchasing. This area is a bit more fragile than the wetlands as a whole.

Next, Mr. May was asked what the time frame was before attaching the L.A. retarding basin to this area. His estimate was roughly between ten (10) and fifteen (15) years. He believes that if you clamp this area to sea level, there will not be nearly as many problems as existing in past years. However, there are some complications that may postpone this action. For one, although there has been no opposition to the Rossmore basin, this is clearly an enhancement project. There are really only two options for wetland property. One could either make it a treatment facility or restore it to its full wetland potential. He noted that treatment facilities require more maintenance than restoration.

Mr. May informed the group that approximately 547 restorable acres are considered acquirable from Earth Corps. This includes the wetlands and some surrounding properties as well. He completed his presentation by showing the group several photos of the wetlands, including an aerial view at high water time and acreage of restored wetland in Seal Beach. The PowerPoint presentation and conceptual restoration plan will be available on the LCWSG website.

Once he finished his presentation, the questions and comments period began. First, a group member stated that they had filed a complaint regarding a toxic dumpsite located on the Bixby property, requesting that remediation take place. Mr. May responded by stating that somebody is going to have to remediate the site at some time. Samples have been taken, and there does not appear to be any leakage. Everyone that Mr. May talked to believes that it is stable. Until there is a good idea of what to do there, no one really wants to deal with the land. Mr. May said, if seriously contaminated, there is a condition that until the site is remediated, no building permits will be issued within a half mile of this site.

Next, Mr. May was asked how proposals such as Home Depot, Seaport Marina, etc. fit into this vision of the wetlands. Mr. May answered that from an environmental perspective, expanding Studebaker would result in disaster. It would divide the wetlands and cause all sorts of problems. Extending Studebaker would make it a major thoroughfare. Although that doesn't have much to do with restoration, he feels that it would be a bad way to go for several reasons, such as public safety. Earth Corps has had problems with Marina Shore West because for a while there was not a clear-cut definition of what a wetlands was at the Conservation Core. He was next asked for his opinion of the other projects in the area, such as Home Depot. Mr. May replied that he does not know why Home Depot has considered the location that it did. Home Depot has considered several other properties there, and since there is another store located almost across the street in Seal Beach, he doesn't see a market demand for it. He continued on to say that common sense typically goes farther than marketing studies. Although the site is not officially deemed as wetlands, there are burrowing owls and other fairly rare species in the area. Mr. May used

the slender salamander as an example, which was thought to have disappeared from the area and “suddenly” appeared on the site. He doesn’t hold much immediate hope for getting the tank farm out of the area, and there is still a huge remediation problem in the area. But in Mr. May’s opinion, there just aren’t good neighboring uses for a Home Depot. There are sewage issues in the area, and there is not enough capacity to handle the existing and projected problems.

When asked for his opinion of the Lennar/Seaport Marina project, Mr. May informed the group that this site is zoned for a hotel. He believes that if appropriately mitigated, it may not be such a bad idea. He’s not so concerned for the wetlands because there aren’t many impacts to the wetlands for either of these projects. There are simply indirect impacts that will result by factors such as traffic, overpopulation, etc. The Chairman Ric Trent then told Mr. May that the group believed that a temporary moratorium should be placed on development in SEADIP until the whole area is reviewed. He asked Mr. May if he thought their recommendation to overarch SEADIP and redefine this area was a good idea. Mr. May replied that the recommendation is a fundamental environmental concept, looking at the cumulative rather than site-by-site. A large amount of funding that is given for wetland restoration is often spent on studies. This expense can go as high as 2/3 of the funding. Despite this high price tag, Mr. May felt the recommendation was not a bad idea.

Mr. May concluded his discussion by telling the group that he feels that what’s in the gene pool is of great value to human beings. There are species whose populations have virtually been stripped, everywhere except Los Cerritos Wetlands. He believes that one day we are going to have an illness that we needed treatment for, and we’ll look back in our gene pool only to realized that we’ve killed of the species that very well could have saved lives.

Other Issues

Before moving on, the minutes from July were approved.

Ric Trent informed the group that it is now time to “wrap up” the group and get a final report completed. He believes that this deserves a little more time than what is available at tonight’s meeting, but he feels that the group needs to start scheduling public input if they feel it is necessary. He proposed that the group organize a well-publicized meeting for other people to attend and voice their feelings. This feedback is to be recorded and included in the final report. After brief discussion regarding possible locations and meeting times, the group agreed to use the September meeting to start drafting a document. The tentative date for the community meeting is Wednesday, October 5, 2005 from 7:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. at Rogers Middle School. Each individual study group member is responsible for handling their association noticing. A press release will be completed in addition to such noticing. Next meeting Date is September 14, 2005

Meeting Adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

MEMORANDUM

Date: September 15, 2005

To: Greg Carpenter

From: Mercedes McLemore

Subject: Minutes from September 14, 2005 LCWSG Meeting

Roll Call:

Ann Denison, College Park Estates
Denis Craig, Island Village HOA
Janice Dahl, University Park Estates
(Chairman) Ric Trent, Naples/Save Our Bay
Tom Lockhart, Belmont Shores Mobile Estates
Thomas Marchese, University Park Estates
Hank Snapper, Spinnaker Bay
Sonia Pawluczyk, Alamos Heights Improvement Association
Mike Pugh, College Park Estates
Dave Bates, Island Village HOA
Ann Cantrell, Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust
Joan McGrath, Belmont Shores Mobile Estates
Lisa Rinaldi, Pacific Villas

City of Long Beach:

Greg Carpenter
Mercedes McLemore

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER—6:10 p.m.

Meeting Open for Public Comments—NONE

Meeting Open for Staff Comments—NONE

Chairman Ric Trent opened the meeting by announcing that it was the “beginning of the end” for the study group. The purpose of the meeting was to plan for the final report that the group will submit to Councilmember Colonna. Mr. Trent felt that there were two major things that the group needed to focus on in the meeting. The first was closing up in an authentic and valid way what the group has been doing for the last year. The second focus was planning for the community forum scheduled on October 5, 2005. He noted that the group

needed to find a way to include people who may not have been included in the process up to this point. Greg Carpenter informed the group that it was time to assign work tasks to the study group members. There was already an outline created using the typical planning approach to complete the study group tasks. At that point, Mr. Carpenter distributed a handout taken from the Planning Commissioner's Handbook. According to him, the group needed to provide the community with a vision for the area, to understand its function; what the study group was established to accomplish, and how long this would take. He then informed the group that following the community forum the group would begin a new task, creating deliverables (finished product). Mr. Carpenter also suggested that the group divide the tasks up amongst the members to be more efficient.

Mr. Trent noted that the issues of importance vary amongst the various neighborhoods represented in the study group. However, they needed to discover "core issues" and make final statements regarding these issues in the final report. Mr. Trent then stated that he was tired of seeing progress take place around the wetlands but not within them. He believes that the group has the opportunity to represent the community and tell their desires and input in some kind of summary that is helpful to the entire City Council. He also noted that there would be a section of the report for dissenting opinions and an addendum with all of the minutes, handouts, and etc. that the group accumulated throughout the year.

Hank Snapper stated that he was bothered by the fact that they are called a wetlands study group, and yet they continue to discuss Home Depot because it is not really a wetlands project. Mr. Trent responded that he believed Home Depot was the reason for the group being established in the first place. He then explained that the group is assigned to review SEADIP, which includes the wetlands and areas around it. Ultimately, the name Los Cerritos Wetlands Study Group was just convenient. Denis Craig added that he believed the Home Depot site is within a wetlands jurisdiction, not sever able. Next, Mr. Snapper stated that he wanted to separate the difference between building on undeveloped lands and on changing existing land uses. Ann Denison said that any project around the wetlands affects the wetlands. Janice Dahl supported her statement, adding that bringing a more intensive use to the area affects the wetlands. Dave Bates said that he was worried that the group was too focused on land use, when they should be focusing on the quality of life for residents in the area. Mr. Trent interjected by stating that the bigger issue is, what will they suggest the City of Long Beach do to fulfill community wishes?

Mr. Carpenter suggested that at the community forum there be a presentation of the findings for each of the subgroups. Mr. Trent believed that this was a great idea, but wanted to also give the community an opportunity to provide feedback. So the most the group should do is synopsise and bullet their ideas in order to guard against seeming like "know-it-alls." Mr. Carpenter agreed to show the group a draft of the press release for this meeting early.

Next, the group decided on major components of the final recommendation/report. The group will be divided into subgroups, which will be responsible for a specific component. Mr. Trent suggested that rather than assigning issues, people should volunteer to ensure that they are passionate about the topic. The component issues (and subtopics) are as follows:

I. TRAFFIC

- Noise
- Loynes/Studebaker
 - Dangerous/Deadly conditions
- Number of Vehicles
- Aggregate effects of existing and future development proposals
- Traffic light coordination
- Accident frequency
- Bridge restrictions
- Air Quality
- Total Assessment (monetary)
- Contradiction with mitigation plans
- Load in current traffic flows for various types of vehicles (i.e. cars, trucks, emergency vehicles, etc.)
- Pedestrian concerns
- Funds currently available for infrastructure improvements

II. ENVIRONMENTAL

- Pollution
 - Air
 - Noise
 - Ground
 - Water
 - Light
 - View/Scenery
 - Contaminants
 - Flotsam (floating debris)
 - Jetsam (sinking debris)
 - Methane
 - Petroleum
- Quality of Life
 - Property values
 - Health
 - Possible cancer clusters
 - Asthma
 - Etc.
 - Safety
 - Recreation
 - Aesthetics
 - Educational Opportunities

- Impact of Humans
- Impact on Humans
- Natural Aspect
 - Hydrology
 - Fishery
 - Wildlife
 - Birds
 - Plants
 - Human Benefits
 - Biological Cycles
 - Purchase Possibilities
 - Existing Structure
 - River Restoration
 - Potable Water Quality
 - Potable Water Source
 - Geology
 - Power Plan Input
 - Flood control impact on natural environment vs. the area as a whole

III. WETLANDS

- Definition of a wetland
- Inventory of the wetlands--% remaining, % lost
- Importance of the wetlands to our survival
- Contribution to quality of life
- Endangered species, wildlife, and habitat inventory
- Open space benefits
- Bigger wetlands vision
- Economic benefits
- Complaints re: wetlands
- City General Plan for the area
- Possibility of preserving the wetlands
- Impact of petroleum operations
- Future uses
- Open space acquisition by City, State, Conservancy, or Corps of Engineers
- Is remediation necessary?

IV. LAND USE

- Current zoning designation for the area
- Master plan for uses
- Acceptable uses according to the community—What do we want to see there?
- Current projects/Proposed projects
- Revenue opportunities for the City of Long Beach
 - Related expenses

- Aesthetics
- General impact of various uses
- Circulation
 - Ingress
 - Egress
 - Accessibility
 - Emergency service access
- Risks associated with certain uses
- Liability
- Geology
 - Fault lines and activities

The following subgroups were created:

- I. Traffic
 - a. CHAIR—Sonia Pawluczyk, Alamitos Heights
 - b. Denis Craig, Island Village
 - c. Janice Dahl, University Park Estates
- II. Environmental
 - a. CHAIR—Ann Denison, College Estates
 - b. Joan McGrath, Belmont Shores Mobile Estates
 - c. Tom Lockhart, Belmont Shores Mobile Estates
- III. Wetlands
 - a. CHAIR—Lisa Rinaldi, Pacific Villas
 - b. Ann Denison, College Estates
 - c. Tom Marchese, University Park Estates
 - d. Hank Snapper, Spinnaker Bay
- IV. Land Use
 - a. CHAIR—Janice Dahl, University Park Estates
 - b. Mike Pugh, College Estates
 - c. Denis Craig, Island Village

The group agreed that each chairperson would submit a list of major points, which would be addressed in the community forum. They also agreed that the forum was intended to be for “pure public input.” The local newspapers would be invited to attend the meeting, and absentee comments would be received by the Planning Department via email and regular mail. Further discussion regarding the format of the meeting followed. Mr. Trent concluded the meeting with a brief recap of the deadlines established during the meeting.

Other Issues

- The Community Forum is October 5, 2005 at Rogers Middle School from 7:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.
- The website for the Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust is
 - www.LCWland.org
 - www.LCSlandtrust.org

MEMORANDUM

Date: October 6, 2005

To: Greg Carpenter

From: Mercedes McLemore

Subject: Minutes from October 5, 2005 Community Forum Meeting

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER—7:00 p.m.

Introduction of City Staff and Los Cerritos Wetlands Study Group

Overview by Ric Trent, Chairman

Presentation made by following subgroup leaders:

Last remaining wetlands by Lisa Rinaldi

Environmental by Ann Dennison

Traffic/Circulation by Sonia Pawluczyk

Land Use by Janice Dahl

Public Comments

Ric Trent told the crowd that a recommendation would be included in the final presentation to the City Council and that the study group members wanted to get as much community feedback as possible beforehand. He asked for the visitors feel free to voice their opinions to the group, because that was their opportunity.

The first comment came from a man who said that he probably lives the closest to the wetlands. He had written a 17-page response to the Home Depot EIR, and gave a copy to Janice Dahl. He stated that he is also involved in the "Stop Home Depot" group. He thinks that the increased revenue is the primary consideration for the City, but it should be more concerned with the residents who live close to this project. He also said that the City is going to consider this revenue as the prime reason for allowing this development. He concluded by telling the group that he is willing to increase his taxes \$50 per year to make sure that this kind of thing does not happen in his community, and believes that many residents in University Park would agree.

The next speaker was Blake MacIntosh of Seal Beach. He stated that he represents the many residents who live in his community, which has one way in and one way out. The access is currently very dangerous. He noticed that none of the impacts to Seal Beach were included in the Study Group's research. He

has a 90- year-old neighbor who navigates this trip each day, and even he has difficulty. Mr. MacIntosh believes that the proposed uses would make living in his community unbearable.

Next up was Ben Goldberg, former University Park Estates Neighborhood Association (UPENA) president. He was born and raised in Long Beach, and has two children who grew up here. He stated that he is a concerned resident for the entire East side of town. Although he is normally in favor of good projects, he thinks that the Home Depot project makes absolutely no sense. He asked City Council to improve Loynes Avenue to no avail. Said that Council waited until someone died to fix it, before then there were only temporary patch jobs done. It's not just University Park Estates that is impacted, because everyone who enters Long Beach on 7th St and Studebaker will be negatively impacted by this project as well. He also said that this is not just a NIMBY ("Not In My Back Yard") approach to Home Depot. We all use HD, but adding it to where there was never any real impact to traffic and public safety would be atrocious. Believes Colonna will vote against it, but is very disappointed by other Council members who are not impacted and thereby choose to support it solely for financial gain.

Taryn Olsen, resident of Belmont Heights area spoke next. She said that she was speaking on behalf of many citizens in Long Beach who live here because they like it just the way that it is. She went on to say that if they wanted to live in a crowded beach city they would move elsewhere. They don't want that, and don't want to be in Orange County where there are mini-malls on every corner, although there may be a little bit more open space. She believes that there is no need for a Master Plan because there is no more planning necessary and that the City is already overdeveloped on the east side. Ms. Olsen concluded by saying that the best land is that with nothing on it, the residents do not want to be like rats in a cage due to overcrowding, no change is necessary.

The next speaker was Mike Reed, a member of the Long Beach Marina Advisory Commission and chair of the Facilities Committee. He follows capital improvement projects and such in the area. He became active last year when the developers came to visit his group. He was very questionable of this project for many of the same reasons as the rest of the study group. He said that at the time, developers had completed a preliminary parking study based on the Home Depot proposal. This study was for November, February and June, which seemed strange to him because seasons don't seem like the important factor as much as the time of day. He also finds it interesting that there is no master plan or major EIR linking all the proposed projects together. Access to traffic congestion over the bridge is also an issue because Davies Bridge cannot be changed. Mr. Reed would like to see this issue discussed in the Traffic study.

Dave Robertson, University Park resident, spoke next. He said that he has been active in recruiting people to come to the meeting. He is incredibly disappointed in the EIR, because he felt that it did not really discuss alternative methods, or

add any information about what Home Depot would offer other than money (according to the PR person). He wanted to know how long it would take to develop a master plan, and would it address infrastructure priorities such as streets, sewers, utilities, etc.? Mr. Trent said that he was not sure how long the process would take, but he hopes that what will come out of this committee and whole process is a pure zoning commission to work on the master plan. He went on to say that there are so many possibilities that it is like a knot that needs to be tied, untied and tied back together. If it is treated as a top priority, the process should take at least a year or year and a half. The infrastructure considerations are necessary because of the 17 major intersections impacted by this area half are controlled by CALTRANS. The other half is city-owned. These lights are not coordinated, and so they remain out of sync. Also, residents are "prisoners" of the bridges, which place large limitations on what can be done there.

Kristen Engelbrecht spoke next. She said that the wetlands are really special, and she grew up being able to enjoy the open space. She hopes that she will still be able to enjoy the view when she establishes a family in Long Beach.

Harley Deer, a Spinnaker Bay resident, stated that he has lived in Long Beach for about 40 years. He believes that there can be a middle ground met. At Spinnaker Bay, there is a wetlands area at the end of his property. It was a miserable place, and they have done a nice job of cleaning it up that the residents can now enjoy it. This area brings other people to the neighborhood to enjoy it as well. Mr. Deer is bothered by the waste, petroleum, and pollution. When he first came to Long Beach, sulfur fuel was being released from the tanks. Now there is natural gas, and Mr. Deer believes that the tanks are no long necessary. He suggested that if anything is developed on the site, let it be something that the residents need. According to him, a small commercial project better than making it a truck terminal, oversized commercial development, or what exists now.

Bret Boeddinghaus said that everyone keeps talking about how the City needs money. He wanted to know at what cost. As a businessman he understands the concept of money and expansion costs. But he does not understand digging up polluted land in a community full of homes with children and elderly. He suggested that if people want to do something good with the land, they should develop it into the wetlands that it was meant to be. He added that anyone who wants to see the fiscal impact of Home Depot should take a copy of the Yellow Pages and open it to the hardware section to see all the local owners that have lost business due to development like this. Mr. Boeddinghaus believes that the EIR was a joke. He stated that the port of Long Beach is the highest producer of carcinogenics, and now the City wants to "pull more up and expose all these people and children to it."

C.J. Hentzen, resident of Island Village, added that last winter was incredible. He drove down 2nd Street everyday and tried to tell the birds that it is not wetlands, but they don't want to leave. Believes that restoring the wetlands

sounds complicated, and it is. But there isn't a whole lot that needs to be done, really. He asked, "How can Huntington Beach, a little area, do this?" He is not a naturalist and is tired of hearing from "tree huggers." But he loves the open space. A lady at a past meeting said "can't we just buy the land? We'll hawk our houses to do it!" It was done for the Golden Gate Bridge.

Richard, an owner in Belmont Heights, found it interesting to know that the group was meeting that night in a school auditorium because he remembered reading an article in the L.A. Times about parks. The article included a study showing that more than 1.5 million children in L.A. County do not live within walking distance to a park. Based on this information, he said that he is in favor of any proposal that promotes more open space.

Phil Barroca asked if the possibility of restoring the Home Depot site to wetlands had been completely ruled out? With all this talk of lack of open space in LA County, there has to be some assistance opportunities for the remediation. Janice Dahl told the group that restoration was one of the study group's suggestions.

Vinnie Logato (sp?) has lived in Long Beach since 1969. He wanted to know what the population density of Long Beach compared to neighboring South Bay cities? He also wanted to know what the California Coastal Commission had to say about this mess? Lastly, how many Home Depot sites do we have in a 5-mile radius of the proposed site? The last time he visited a Lowe's it looked like it was going out of business.

Charles Supple has lived in Naples since 1994, and he was on Planning Commission in Manhattan Beach a while back. At that time, the Commission took consideration of studying 60 acres belonging to El Segundo that was used as a tank farm. He told the group that the whole project took a year and a half to complete. The biggest single issue was the dirt. Therefore, considering the "rotten soil" over on the Home Depot site would be extremely important and he can't imagine overlooking that.

Norm Ryan is an elected official of the Water District. He had no intentions of speaking and did not want to add to answers, but he does have questions. According to Mr. Ryan, on the land behind the tank farm they are digging about 100 feet below the property, and mixing clay and gravel to make a wall underneath. He doesn't know how a federal grant allowed this work to be completed without an EIR. He suggested checking with the Orange County Water Department to see what information is available. Mr. Trent said that he would get in touch so that they can compare their maps and see if it is a former burn site.

Steve McCord of Belmont Shore Mobile Estates said that he feels proud to be a resident of Long Beach after hearing all of the effort that is being put into the area. He hadn't heard allot about the economic value of a wetland, only those benefits of the Home Depot. He suggested that the group consider things that

one can't really put a price tag on. He said that he works with children, and it breaks his heart to see children suffering from anxiety attacks and other issues that are much too much for them to handle. He stood at El Dorado Nature Center and saw the children's faces when they were around wildlife and nature. So many children spend more time sitting in front of a television or video game, that they have become disconnected with the real world. He is proud to hear a lot of great ideas for a more sensible use of this property. He believes that they need open space for adults and children to maintain sanity from living in the city.

Mark Bixby lives in University Park. He is not a member of the famous property-owning Bixby family. He is fully in favor of open space. He has heard the emotion, and recognizes that this is an emotional issue. Believes that they need to work together to purchase the site if they want wetlands there. The property owners still need compensation. He is a "water person," and has been a surfing and water sports fan for a long time. He has experienced driving on Loynes Avenue, and stated that it has always been a problem because people are always going to drive recklessly. He believes that after several accidents, the City has done a good job of fixing it. However, closing or widening it wouldn't make sense because the street is way below capacity. Therefore, Loynes is really a non-issue because most of the people who lose their lives were speeding and being reckless. He is concerned with the traffic impacts of Home Depot, but believes that most of these can be mitigated. He fully sympathizes with people that worry about access into their neighborhood, but wants everyone to recognize that there are worse alternatives. The residents do not want industrial, yet that is the permitted use according to the current zoning. He doesn't recommend a moratorium because the applicant would sue the City, and rightfully so. Because the applicant is following the proper entitlement process, residents should consider alternatives. He is in favor of some commercial development on site, and doesn't believe that this is a wetlands property; it's just in the vicinity. The project will dramatically enhance the area, and the property values will not decrease. The property values will probably increase due to the additional services being available after the construction.

Doug Otto has been a resident for many years and is legal council for the applicant. (Note: Mr. Otto has been retained as legal counsel for Home Depot). He said that he has "cut his teeth" by writing the last transportation element years ago. He served on Planning Commission for 8 years and was Chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee. He just finished with the Master Plan for the Aquarium and worked on that board. He has tons of experience with the planning process. He explained to the crowd that the study group is a recommending body for the City Council, who has the actual vote. He is sympathetic with the concept of studying SEADIP further because it is not as "tortured" a task as some make it seem. There is a plan for the City, and as soon as they get passed, there's guaranteed to be some people who will want to change that. SEADIP can be reviewed, as most plans can. But Mr. Otto believes that there is a whole other thing going on. The EIR process for Home Depot has been going on for the last 13 months. He does not believe that

changing SEADIP will affect the Home Depot process. He encourages people to be active in the Home Depot review because that is the way the planning process works. He said that it is a good process, and the way things should be done because everyone is given the opportunity to weight in on the issues and get feedback. For years he has heard people say that Area 19 of SEADIP will never be used as a wetlands. A desalination plant was proposed, but would be impossible if the wetlands were restored. He added that buying the tanks would cost the City roughly \$50 million.

Sally Miller lives near the greenbelt, and has lived in Long Beach since she was 7 years old. Her children were raised here. She enjoys the view from her backyard and does not want to see a Home Depot.

Don Schubert is a resident of University Park who is strongly opposed to Home Depot for several reasons. The first is that Loynes is like a roller coaster, and he drives 20 miles per hour just to avoid motion sickness. He doesn't want to see any more traffic there. He thinks that having Home Depot there will create more traffic and pollution. Secondly, he doesn't want to inhale the dirty air that will result from digging up the dirt. He believes that in District 3 there is enough money available to buy the land and compensate the current owner(s).

Mary Parcel lives in 4th District and doesn't consider this to be just a 3rd District issue. She is a bird watcher by hobby, and wanted to inform the group that the area has been designated biologically as an important bird area. It is tied into another environmentally sensitive area, not just Long Beach. The California Coastal Conservancy has been trying to negotiate the purchase of this land, so there is hope.

Closing

Mr. Trent closed the meeting by mentioning the Boeing industrial park being proposed in Seal Beach. He suggested that people drive by to take a look at that site, which is not considered in the EIR. He then thanked everyone for coming and offering input. Those who signed in will receive a copy of the final report by the study group.

Written Comments

- *Blake MacIntosh*: The exit of 7th Street at Studebaker going west was only one legal entrance to College Park West, which is located in Seal Beach. It is currently a very dangerous intersection which my 93 year old neighbor must navigate everyday. It is illegal to enter this neighborhood any other way during permit hours. This proposal would make a dangerous situation even worse.
- *Eileen Ryan*: L.B. has consistently won national awards for parks and recreation. Future plans for our area should not lose sight of our reputation, rather should enhance it. Los Cerritos Wetlands remediation is a must!

- *Eleanor Palmer:* With global warming and hurricanes New Orleans is suffering in part because they drained their wetlands for developers. Who knows what 50 or 100 years will bring to Long Beach in the form of natural disasters? Will we be ready, or be vulnerable?
- *Steven Blue:* I'm a realtor in Naples. I, and others from my office, would HATE to see the wetlands developed for commercial or residential use.
- *Linda Vizzini:* I'm concerned about preserving and restoring our wetlands, open space and the quality of life in Southern California and Long Beach area. I'm concerned about the light pollution, traffic, and toxic pollution that would accompany this development. In terms of traffic, please consider the impact of the Boeing Development going on now next to Island Village on Studebaker and Second Street to the Orange County line. The City has preserved Bluff Park, Sims Pond, and now it needs to preserve our wetlands! I would love to see no development but any should be ecologically friendly in terms of pollution (light and other), traffic, noise, etc. Let's reclaim our wetlands and develop them for eco-tourism. Do we need to start walking petitions? I'll volunteer!
- *Jan Arboit:* Pacific right-of-way was stopped by the people in Long Beach when they didn't want developers building condos—why can't we do the same?
- *Kerry Martin:* I am in favor of trying to preserve and restore as much of the Los Cerritos Wetlands area as possible as wetlands. Development is important but so is nature. In such an overwhelming urban environment every little bit of nature is so important, valuable, and helps keep us human. The wetlands that are already there is a pristine jewel and needs to be protected. Thanks.
- *Sherri Stuhl:* I appreciate the opportunity to listen to all views of the proposed project. I live in University Park Estates and I love my quiet little neighborhood. I drive in Beverly Hills, Hollywood, and Santa Monica everyday and I appreciate coming home to such a peaceful area. I am concerned with through traffic, more crime, accidents, noise and pollution. I look forward to coming home for a break.

MEMORANDUM

Date: October 13, 2005

To: Greg Carpenter

From: Mercedes McLemore

Subject: Minutes from October 12, 2005 LCWSG Meeting

Roll Call:

Ann Denison
Dave Bates
John Becker
Tom Lockhart
Joan McGrath
Janice Dahl
Thomas Marchese
Hank Snapper
Ric Trent
Lisa Rinaldi

City of Long Beach:

Greg Carpenter
Mercedes McLemore

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER—6:05 p.m.

Meeting Open for Public Comments—Reserved for next meeting

Meeting Open for Staff Comments—NONE

Chairman Ric Trent wanted to go immediately to the minutes from the October 5, 2005 Community Forum, and see if anyone noticed any necessary corrections. The group members suggested some parenthetical quotes be added addressing a few of the public comments that were made at the forum. The PowerPoint presentation will also be modified to include an additional guest speaker that the group saw who was not listed in the original.

Mr. Trent said that the group has laid a foundation for how to approach the final report to Councilman Colonna. He suggested that one section of this report include the information that was presented during the forum. The report will open with an executive summary that includes the purpose of the group, timing, guest speakers, and corpus of their recommendation. He felt this is necessary to avoid

people having to wade through the entire report in order to get the general idea of the study group's recommendation.

Hank Snapper suggested that there be room in the report for the majority and minority/dissenting opinion. Mr. Trent guaranteed Mr. Snapper that there would be room for this opinion in the summary as well as later on in the body of the report.

The second section of the report will be the information that was presented to the public, the major topic areas and overview. Mr. Trent stated that the group should review the minutes from each of the speakers to get more detail. These minutes were used to give a general presentation to the public, but they were not necessarily informational. Some information was provided during the guest speakers' presentations that are interesting and important for the community to know. However, the forum did not provide enough time to share all of that information. Mr. Trent believes that a zoning council will be formed eventually with the task of reviewing the current zoning and possibly changing SEADIP. The study group is not equipped to rezone the area. The report should act as a "tee-up" for a zoning council to refer to so that they do not have to cover or research things that the study group has already done.

Joan McGrath suggested including a mission statement of the group within the executive summary. Dave Bates wanted to know if specific uses would be suggested in the report. The group decided that was not necessary. There are many factors that need to be considered in determining the best uses for specific areas. While the study group was great for providing a voice for the community as a whole, an official zoning group should be established. There are all of contemporary issues existing in the wetlands area there were not considerations when SEADIP was written. It is important that in the final report, it is clearly conveyed that it is the official opinion of the study group members, as leaders of their specific groups and homeowner's associations.

Mr. Snapper asked what was the difference between the delegates and alternates of the study group. He wanted to know if the alternates could voice their opinions within the final report. Mr. Trent informed the group that the only way an alternate would have a "voice" in the final report was if they were replacing the originally assigned delegate. Next, Mr. Snapper expressed his disappointment in the lack of participation of other community groups. There were about 15 organizations invited to participate in the study group, and yet a large number of these organizations are not represented because members never chose to show up. Considering that about half of the invited organizations are present, it is not good that there are two spokespeople from each group. Mr. Snapper feels like a minority in the group because there are two reps for each group present coming to the meetings and voting. However, Mr. Trent guaranteed Mr. Snapper that there will be a single person from each group being represented in the final report.

Mr. Bates asked that the group also clarify in the report that it did not only consider Home Depot. The issues that they address are much larger than a single project. Mr. Trent agreed, stating that it should be discussed in the report because the project is the main reason for the study group forming. However, their concern is much greater than just the Home Depot site. This was not conveyed in the forum meeting. The group agreed that the delegates would be the ones to write the official opinion of their groups, but that the alternates had the option of writing an additional commentary in support or opposition to provide the full range of input from their neighbors. The "section leaders" for the second portion of the report are all actual delegates. But these people could call on whomever they wanted to give a more rounded, legitimate view from their organization.

The third section of the report would be official letters from the various HOAs and organizations represented in the study group. Each group shall submit an official letter from the President/leader giving their individual opinions.

The fourth section of the report will be the memorialization/minutes section. Greg Carpenter said that this section could also be used as an appendix. It would include press clippings and such. The group agreed to bring copies of their columns and articles to the next meeting.

The fifth section is designated for media reports and public comments. The group agreed to include all other handouts and informative materials collected and provided on the website, such as PowerPoint presentations, maps and such. In addition to this material, the report will include a resource page with other references that people could use for more information.

The group recommendation will be the final section of the report (Section Six). The idea is that once the reader has viewed all of the materials included in the report, they can see the recommendation that is based on this info. The minority opinion will be added here as well.

Mr. Trent told the group that the org letters shall be no more than three pages in length. The mission statement and executive summary should not exceed two pages. The topic areas/overviews should consist of the bullet points used in the presentation, as well as any additional points missed and a few sentences elaborating on each. The minutes and handouts section will be a major piece, and may even be a separate section altogether. They will decide that once the report sections are completed.

The group decided that the same people who were responsible for presenting the main topics at the forum would be responsible for writing about these topics in the final report. By the next meeting on November 9, 2005, these will be complete. Mr. Trent is responsible for completing the executive summary and draft recommendation. Each person would forward their portion of the report to Mercedes McLemore, Community Planner for the area.

The group discussed the "minority opinion" issue further. Mr. Snapper stated that he would be considering alternative uses for the area. According to him, the majority of Spinnaker Bay residents wish to focus on restoring and preserving the wetlands. They also believe that people should face the fact that the storage tanks will probably not be converted. Like Doug Otto stated during the community forum, Mr. Snapper believes that no matter what happens, the Home Depot site will not be reverted to wetlands. People need to accept the fact that the property owner is a businessman in the purest sense. He owns hundreds of properties, most of which are truck depots. Although the owner is willing to try a commercial use on the site, it is currently zoned industrial. Therefore, a truck depot is still a possible use for that site and no one really wants to see that on the site either. Mr. Snapper also wants to address the possibility of extending Studebaker and addressing the existing traffic issues in the area. Mr. Bates said that the minority and majority have the same goals and agree in all of respects. Where they differ is the idea of placing a big box retail use on the site. Mr. Carpenter stated that Mr. Snapper may refine his opinion once he is able to read the majority opinion. In the meantime, both will write separate recommendations and come back in November to consider both.

Next, CJ Hentzen stood up to address Mr. Snapper. According to Mr. Hentzen, when he opened his garage the other night he saw 50 wildlife species. At night, he hears predators. In an area of 100 yards there are ground pelicans, great blues, great egrets, cattle egrets, and seagulls. He said that he is not a naturalist, but believes that we are losing a tremendous opportunity. Mr. Hentzen wants the owner to make money, but does not understand how Huntington Beach can spend so much money to restore wetlands while Long Beach cannot. He is willing to sell his house to preserve the wetlands. Mr. Snapper agreed with Mr. Hentzen's concern for the wetlands, but does not believe that the Home Depot site is or will ever be wetlands. Mr. Bates said that the majority opinion/recommendation should be written first, and then the study group members should return a month later with a statement from their respective organizations. It is possible that there will be more than one "minority" opinion. Mr. Trent suggested that secular issues, such as continuing Studebaker through, should be addressed as options in the organization letters.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 9, 2005, 6:00 p.m.

PART VI: Additional Commentary

Minority Report

The signers of this minority report wish to thank both Councilman Frank Colonna for the opportunity to participate in the Los Cerritos Wetlands Study Group over the past year and a half and Chair Ric Trent for allowing those of use who disagree with the recommendations of the majority report to provide alternative recommendations and analyses. Most of use that live in the Los Cerritos Wetlands area are avid boaters, kayakers, and/or walkers, and are well aware that the Los Cerritos Wetlands are an important part of our quality of life and contribute to the value of our properties.

When the study group was formed almost 18 months ago, there was a great deal of excitement. Many local residents wanted to contribute to the identification and restoration of the Los Cerritos Wetlands as a matter of community service. The group's original goals, to focus on the key environmental issues of wetlands identification and restoration and increasing traffic congestion on the wetlands, were commendable. Unfortunately, the study group's focus became the proposed Home Depot project, and not environmental issues associated with wetlands restoration ad the effect of traffic congestion on the wetlands. As a result, approximately one-half of the neighborhood associations either declined to serve on the study group or discontinued their participation.

This report first states the recommendation of the study group, and then analyzes how we came to these conclusions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the City give a high priority to the preservation and restoration of the Los Cerritos Wetlands by moving forward with all deliberate speed to define the boundaries of the Wetlands. We are encouraged that this task can be completed in a timely manner by similar work done at the Seal Beach Naval Weapons Station and Bolsa Chica Wetlands.
2. That the City of Long Beach definitely conclude that the property referred to as Parcel No. 19 in the SEADIP Planned Development Ordinance (the area east of Studebaker Road, north of Second Street/Westminster, and west of Leisure World) is ***not*** a wetlands area and allow the property to develop consistent with its land use status in the City's General Plan and the City's overall planning process.
3. That the City of Long Beach address the impact of traffic congestion on the quality of life in the Los Cerritos Wetlands area and explore the possibilities of extending Studebaker Road from Pacific Coast Highway

in an environmentally sensitive way, such as has been done across the Bolsa Chica Wetlands.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The majority report is flawed for a number of reasons, but most importantly because it recommends a moratorium on any and all industrial projects in the study area until the SEADIP Planned Development Ordinance can be revisited. As a rule, moratoria are a bad idea because they artificially interfere with the workings of the marketplace in making land use decisions and drive up the cost of land by unnecessarily delaying currently proposed development in possible violation of the rights of property owners. Absent extreme exigent circumstances, moratoria as a planning device are usually ill-advised. No such extreme exigent circumstances exist here.

Based on the extent and tenor of the discussions at almost all of the study group meetings, including the public meetings, the majority's recommendation is merely an effort to derail the Home Depot project. That project was not the subject of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Study Group. It should be evaluated on its own merits in the context of the planning process which provides ample opportunity for environmental review, including any impacts the project may have on the Los Cerritos Wetlands. It is unrealistic, and even fanciful, to think that the development of Parcel No. 19 should be torn down so it can be allowed to revert back into wetlands. The cost of acquiring that property is estimated at over \$50 million, beyond the means of the City of Long Beach at this time, and not worth a candle.

In addition, the proposed moratorium on industrial development in the Los Cerritos Wetlands area fails to take into consideration both the condition of modern industrial development and the desalination pilot project in the Parcel No. 19 area now underway by the Long Beach Water Department. Much modern industry is clean and desirable in terms of enhancing revenues to the City. The desalination pilot project could be expanded, but disallowing industrial development in the area would prevent this environmentally progressive project. Finally, it is arrogant for one district of the city to refuse to bear its fair share of providing a tax base for the city in the form of industrial development.

Hank Snapper,
Spinnaker Bay Homeowners' Association

Response from Sam Smock, Pacific Villas Homeowners' Association

REBUTTAL TO MINORITY REPORT OF LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS STUDY GROUP

PAGE 1 OF 1, PARAGRAPH 2

Addressing the statement, "Unfortunately, the study group's focus became the proposed Home Depot project, and not the environmental issues associated with wetlands restoration and the effect of traffic congestion on the wetlands":

The minority has not proffered any facts, evidence or testimony to support this statement. Therefore, this statement is groundless and untrue.

On the contrary, the study group has in fact focused on these very issues, **and more**, as demonstrated by the subjects covered by the speakers at each and every meeting of the study group (see page 4). The Final Report of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Study Group is documentary evidence to support the group's wide-ranging focus and is in direct contradiction of the minority's groundless and untrue statement.

Addressing the statement, "As a result, approximately one-half of the neighborhood associations either declined to serve on the study group or discontinued their participation":

The minority has not proffered any facts, evidence or testimony to support this statement. Therefore, this statement is groundless and untrue. If, in fact, this was the case (which has not been proved), then it was the duty of those homeowner associations to participate in the study group and in this process and make their voices heard.

ITEM #3 UNDER "RECOMMENDATIONS"

The present construction on Pacific Coast Highway in the Bolsa Chica Wetlands area has nothing to do with "addressing the impact of traffic congestion". The purpose of the construction to elevate Pacific Coast Highway is to allow a channel to be dug from the ocean directly into the Bolsa Chica Wetlands. This will restore Bolsa Chica to what it was before the duck hunters filled in the sea channel in the 1920's to maximize their sport.

PAGE 2 OF 2, PARAGRAPH 2 UNDER "DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS"

Addressing the statement, "Based on the extent and tenor of the discussions at almost all of the study group meetings, including the public meetings, the majority's recommendation is merely an effort to derail the Home Depot Project":

The minority makes a sweeping generalized biased statement without specifics. They have not proffered any facts, evidence or testimony to support their opinion.

The phrase "public meetings" infers two or more meetings. There was **one** public meeting in which the focus of the **audience's** comments was the Home Depot project. This was not the focus of the study group's public forum as evidenced by our Power Point presentation, which covered wetlands, traffic, environment and land use. The only mention of the Home Depot project in the study group's presentation at the public forum was to include it as one of four proposed projects in the Study Area.

The \$50 million figure is erroneous. The present owners purchased the property for under \$2 million.

Addressing the statement, "It is unrealistic, and even fanciful, to think that the development in Parcel No. 19 should be torn down so it can be allowed to revert back into wetlands":

The reader of the Final Report will not find any such suggestion put forth in the report.

IN SUMMARY

The minority report, at the least, belittles the yearlong work of the study group and, at the worst, makes unfounded and unsupported accusations about the study group's motives. Taken on its face and left un-rebutted, it would make meaningless the efforts of every person involved, including every speaker at the study group meetings.

The minority accuses the majority of bias against Home Depot and of focusing only on Home Depot. I suggest to the reader that the bias and narrow focus lie with the minority.

Samuel Smock
PACIFIC VILLAS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Response from Sonia Pawluczyk, Alamitos Heights Improvement Association

Our committee was formed after the Home Depot project came to light. There was such a concern in our community that Councilman Frank Colonna decided to invite homeowners associations to participate in the later called "Los Cerritos Wetlands Study Group". I do not know the total number of associations that were invited.

Why some associations decided not to participate in the process or why some decided to leave the group is unknown to me as there was no official notification to our group. At this point each member of the group can only **speculate** the reasons for no participation.

As soon as we started meeting, the group which was formed as consequence of the Home Depot project, expanded the scope of the study to include the wetlands and adjacent area. All this area, now called Study Area (including Parcel 19) is already surrounded by highly developed land that includes not only houses but also retail, highly transited roads, power plants and others. The only way to protect our precious wetlands is to study the fully impact that **all** the multiple projects already being considered for this sensitive area may have in the wetlands, before any project is allowed to go through.

Many different agencies were invited to talk to our study group including the Home Depot representatives. Taking into account **all the information** received, is how the majority report was done.

Sonia Pawluczyk

Response from Mike Pugh, College Estates

I do not feel the majority of the groups involved with the study area are leaning, or picking specifically on Home Depot. The final recommendations were made considering cumulative effects from all the proposed projects in and around the study area. The point by the minority proposing that Studebaker be extended was ill advised by our traffic engineering representative, first due to cost, environmental concerns, and the fact that we would be just moving traffic around not diminishing it, and second, its still with in an island. The so-called 50 Million dollar price tag for acquiring parcel 19 was thrown out to the public by an attorney for Home Depot as a scare tactic. As a Real Estate Broker with a commercial designation I personally reviewed recent sales in Long Beach comparable to parcel 19. The highest sale was just over 2 million; it may cost a lot to remediate the land, but no way would it reach 50 million The only **industrial** development proposed in and around the study area is in Seal Beach at the Boeing plant, all proposed development is **commercial** which creates more impact which it seems both minority and majority seem to agree on

Mike Pugh
College Estates

Response from Tom Lockhart, Belmont Shores Mobile Estates

The Belmont Shores Mobile Estates (BSME) response to the Minority Report:

From a strictly administrative standpoint, what "study group" is the Minority Report referring to? In the second paragraph of Section A it sounds like the Los Cerritos Study Group chaired by Ric Trent. In the third paragraph of Section A it sounds like the conclusions of the Spinnaker Bay "study group". Much the same as the confusion in the article in one of the local free newspapers several months ago.

BSME disagrees strongly with the assertion in paragraph 2 that the focus of the Los Cerritos Study Group became the Home Depot. The focus always included in a significant manner the environmental considerations of the Wetlands. We heard presentations from the Coastal Conservancy, Coastal Commission, and an environmental group (Earth Corps/Don May).

In the Study and Analysis:

BSME strongly agrees with the idea of a moratorium until a comprehensive plan is analyzed for the entire area under consideration. Piecemeal analysis masks the extent of the impact of proposed development projects. The total impact can only be known through a comprehensive analysis. There is no urgency associated with any of the proposed developments. The time should be taken to look at all the implications of all the proposals taken as a whole, not individually.

Also, we disagree in the strongest possible manner with the last sentence of the last paragraph of the Discussion and Analysis. The Third District already pays more than the average District share of taxes by virtue of the fact that Third District residents are the most affluent in the City. We already pay more than we should. If we may be blunt, the City's need for additional revenue has nothing to do with which District pays how much. It has to do with the City's gross mismanagement of its finances over the last several years.

In addition, we find it very disappointing that there are no reports from the Spinnaker Bay Association or Bixby Village Association as to the number of residents in each who support the pro and con positions on these issues. We distinctly remember that all associations were instructed to poll their members and include the poll results in their respective reports.

Tom Lockhart

Summary Rebuttal from Ric Trent, Chairman

As Chairman of the LCWSG, I have been asked by the Committee to summarize the rebuttals they have written to the Minority Opinion filed at our last official meeting by Hank Snapper of the Spinnaker Bay Homeowners Association.

The Majority members disagreed with a number of the claims and opinions of the Minority Report. There was universal disagreement with the claim that the LCWSG spent their time focused on the Home Depot proposed for Parcel #19 of the study area.

The Majority argues to the contrary, the committee spent a large percentage of its time in presentations from experts in many fields, (i.e. Traffic Management, Petroleum Operations, the EIR and CEQA processes, The California Coastal Commission, The California Coastal Conservancy, The San Gabriel River Trust, California Earth Corps, and Government Solutions, the Home Depot Project Approval Group). The insight gained by the Committee from these presentations transcended any one project or consideration relative to the "Study Area".

The Minority argues that over half of the homeowners' groups invited to participate in the LCWSG did not choose to attend. In that observation the Minority was correct. However the assumptive conclusion that is proffered by the Minority for the reason behind the non-involvement is rejected by the Majority as unsubstantiated and false. To wit: they were turned off by the ambient anti-Home Depot attitude of the Committee. The Majority believes that this is totally speculative. No evidence has been offered to support this assumption. The Majority felt that a 50% turn-out to a civic request committee was a positive sign of interest in the Wetland Project, and higher than the normal citizen's response for many urban study project's. There was no contact made by the Minority with the non-attendees to support the assumption.

The Minority Report cites the value of the land at Parcel 19 as, \$50,000,000. This comment creates a very skeptical Majority. It is well known from public records that the sales price of the proposed Home Depot Project was approximately \$2,000,000. The Majority wonders why this attempt to set so high a value on the land in question was even included in the Minority Report. It certainly is not in response to anything in the Majority Report.

The Majority of the members of the LCWSG, have recommended that a temporary moratorium be enacted for the whole Study Area, regardless of what the proposed projects consist of, until a MASTER PLAN can be created which takes ALL proposed projects into consideration. The committee proposed a logical municipal process that will insure a higher quality outcome for the Study Area.

Sincerely,
Ric Trent- Chairman LCWSG

PART VI: Important Unanswered Questions

1. What is the status of the groundwater, well water, and aquifers from the pollution standpoint, around the Wetlands?
2. Have any tests been done in the area that may shed light on the threat from subsurface contaminants? What are the results of these tests?
3. Does any of the electricity generated by the AES plant go to local residents?
4. Was that plant brought up to current AQMD standards when it was acquired by AES?
5. Is there a current valuation of the properties that include wetlands in the LCWSG area? What is that figure?
6. Which process would be the most effective way to update SEADIP?
7. Should that process take into consideration the uncertified parcels of land inside the wetlands study area? Should a process be outlined as to how these parcels can be certified for the "go forward"?
8. Has the City of Long Beach estimated the cost and time it would take to rehabilitate dumps 1 through 6 in the study area?
9. What are the readings and results of emissions tests at both the Haines Point and AES plants. Have AQMD tests been done? If so, when and what were the results?
10. Do the current rules for commercial aircraft heading in to Long Beach Airport allow or require that the airliners dump atomized jet fuel on the final approach? If this is happening, wouldn't it be over the wetland area? What would the impact of such jettisoning be?
11. Is the City of Long Beach the entity best suited to analyze the multiple risks to the wetlands from activity around the wetlands including, traffic, development, noise, the constant operation of the AES cooling intakes, contaminants (water, soil, and air)? If not, then who?
12. Will the costs of the "health risk assessment" that is needed before any development is approved that opens the subsoil to exposure, be borne by the developer?
13. What can be legally done to allow private individuals or concerned businesses to start "restoring" the wetlands? Can a replanting of native

- species on a volunteer basis begin? Who can tell the public what can be done and what can't be done in the wetland area?
14. What would be the impact of reconnecting the AES cooling channels with the San Gabriel River? Some experts say that this "reconnection" would be a great first step in restoring the Wetlands? Are they correct?
15. Do lawful prescriptive public easements (i.e. 20 feet above the high tide line) presently exist? Can the public site this precedent as a "right to pass" in order to even visit the wetlands?
16. If a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) is established as the LCWSG has recommended, can that body help to clear up the confusing jurisdictional rights of the public's access to the Los Cerritos Wetlands?

PART VII: Media Reports

DEVELOPMENT CONCERNS

Studebaker Task Force Invites Expert Opinions

By Amy Bentley-Smith
Features Editor

An environmental review of a proposed development anchored by The Home Depot at Studebaker and Loynes won't be complete until next month, and one for another center at Studebaker and Pacific Coast Highway is just beginning.

Add to that the potential for even more development in the area — as for sale signs around Los Cerritos Wetlands portend — and a proposal to connect Studebaker behind the Marketplace, and it's safe to say the Studebaker/Los Cerritos Wetlands area could change drastically in the coming years.

To address these potential changes and their impacts and possibly revise a development plan (the Southeast Area Development and Improvement Plan, otherwise known as SEADIP) now more than 20 years old, Third District Councilman

Frank Colonna formed a community-based task force a couple of months ago. That group will meet for a third time next Wednesday, Nov. 10, at the Seal Beach Yacht Club.

Ric Trent, the newly appointed chair of the group, said the first couple of meetings focused on getting organized and hearing some of the most immediate concerns from people.

"There are a lot who don't have the background to make a good, informed decision. That was apparent the first couple of meetings," Trent said, admitting he was one of those. "It was decided that we were going to bring in experts in all the areas requiring technical expertise to educate those in attendance."

Wednesday night's meeting will be the first in a series that will feature a guest speaker. Dave Roseman, city traffic engineer, will talk about traffic flow.

(Continued on Page 9A)

Task Force

(Continued from Page 8A)

Future meetings will look at oil operations, environmental conditions, energy facilities and land use. The group intends to continue meeting the second Wednesday of every month.

Trent is no stranger to task forces. He took part in a community task force to create a master plan for Alamitos Bay, particularly focused on what a rebuild of Alamitos Bay Marina should look like and how much and what kind of development should be along Marina Drive. That group spent three years debating the issues.

"I hope my perspective on the Alamitos Bay Master Plan Study Committee will help," Trent said. "I certainly hope this doesn't take another three years."

Peninsula-Wide Yard Sale Saturday

A Peninsula-wide yard sale will take place this Saturday.

Organized by the Alamitos Bay Beach Preservation Group and the Alamitos Bay Garden Club, the Super Sale Saturday

The Studebaker/Los Cerritos issues appear to be as polarized as those that caused formation of the Alamitos Bay group. Then, bay area residents were adamantly opposed to a proposal to build a boutique hotel overlooking the bay.

Now, another group of residents, near Studebaker and Loynes, are equally as up in arms over plans for The Home Depot development on an oil tank farm at the terminus of Loynes. They say it would create worse traffic than already exists in the area and would increase noise and light pollution. Those concerns are currently being addressed in an environmental review report due out soon.

Environmentalists also are against the project, and another known as Marina Shores East being proposed on formerly des-

will be from 8 a.m. to noon. Proceeds from the sale will go to the Peninsula Median Improvement Project.

The Peninsula is from Bay Shore Avenue to 72nd Place.

ignated wetlands land adjacent to the Marketplace (the Pa' Pumpkin Patch is set up there now).

And Bixby Ranch Company's plans to sell off Los Cerritos Wetlands land and its mineral rights as commercial property is hampering efforts to restore the wetlands, something environmentalists and Colonna separately have been working on for years.

Trent admitted that members of the task force are very polarized at this point. His objective is to get all the information, hear as many opinions as possible, not only from experts but also the public, and attempt to find some way to move forward, even if opinions are still split.

"Until all the viewpoints are connected and everyone has learned the issues, I don't think anything will be done from a consensus standpoint," Trent said. "There's nothing but questions at this point."

The meeting next Wednesday begins at 6 p.m. The Seal Beach Yacht Club is at 255 Marina Dr.

For details, contact Colonna's field office at 570-8756.

Deal to buy wetlands link may sink

By Joe Segura
STAFF WRITER

Environmental activist Don May has been shuttling between Long Beach and Sacramento during the past few weeks, attempting to salvage a \$14 million land purchase deal that might unravel in the next few weeks.

The deal concerns the Bryant property, which is at Long Beach's eastern border near the mouth of the San Gabriel River. The property is key to any restoration to the adjacent Los Cerritos Wetlands restoration effort, because the Bryant piece of the puzzle would be the water access route between the river channel to the wetlands, according to May.

May said there might be an effort by state officials to get a year's extension on the deadline



shore patrol

to seal the deal, but he doesn't see much promise in the effort.

"I'm not nearly as optimistic as others are that the plan can be salvaged," he said in a recent interview.

May said all the documentation work has been completed,

including three or four appraisals for fair purchase price. And he said there are no contamination issues that might stall the purchase.

"Nobody seems able to close the deal, and it's very frustrating," he said.

There is a June 30 deadline to seal the purchase deal, while the public funding is still available. There might be a grace period, May said, but the funding could be lost if a deal isn't sealed soon, adding that it takes 60 days for the state finance department to write a check — making Sunday the deadline for an agreement to be reached.

"It gets harder and harder as the clock ticks," May said.

Once the funding deadline passes, the money could be transferred to other restoration purchases, and it could be 20

years before the Bryant purchase project would be considered again.

"This is a deal whose time has come," he said. "It's an opportunity that will become an enormous shame if we let it slip through our hands."

MERCHANT MARINES

They're the unsung heroes of World War II.

On Saturday, the SS Lane Victory will host a reunion of World War II merchant marine veterans from all over the country.

During the war, they sailed cargo ships and tankers on the seven seas from the North Atlantic to the Mediterranean and from the Pacific Ocean to the shores of the Indian Ocean, delivering food, medicine, water, tanks, guns and trucks to troops.

The routes were dangerous, as

enemy subs were a constant menace. More than 6,000 crew members were killed.

The Lane Victory will dock at the Catalina Terminal in San Pedro. Visitors will be welcome between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.

JUST SAY NO

Los Alamitos Unified School District — serving Los Alamitos, Rossmoor and Seal Beach — will host a prevention coalition meeting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday in the district board room, at 10293 Bloomfield Ave.

Officials will provide information on substance abuse and date rape. Among the speakers will be policewoman Melissa Porter, a school resource officer, and Assistant Principal Phil Bowen of Los Alamitos High School.

MEETING SET FOR OCT. 5**Public Forum Looks At Wetlands' Future**

By Harry Saltzgaver
Executive Editor

The latest group studying uses on and around the Los Cerritos Wetlands will ask the public what it thinks should happen there at a forum early next month.

Called the Los Cerritos Wetlands Study Group, the task force was formed by Third District Councilman Frank Colonna last year after two proposed retail developments were proposed on the borders of the deteriorated wetlands. Since then, Bixby Ranch Company has withdrawn a plan to offer the wetlands for sale to developers — now saying they want to continue pumping oil there — and a third large mixed-used development has been proposed to the west of the wetlands and Pacific Coast Highway.

Most of Los Cerritos Wetlands currently is degraded and dotted with working oil wells. Bixby Ranch owns 181 acres, or more than half of the wetland

property. For the last decade, the land company has been involved in negotiations with the state Land Conservancy to sell the property and restore it to wetlands. Those negotiations collapsed last year (largely on the escalating price of oil).

Colonna asked the group to consider land use on and around the wetlands, defined as the area south of the Los Cerritos Channel and east of Pacific Coast Highway to the Orange County border. That includes the wetland area, the Marketplace shopping center and Bixby Ranch's oil operation headquarters, off Second Street.

The developments in those boundaries include a Home Depot Design Center at the end of Loynes Drive on Studebaker Road (currently an oil tank farm) and the Marina Shores East mini-mall south of the Marketplace (sometimes called the Pumpkin Patch). While the Marina Shores project has been on hold since it was first pub-

licly proposed, the Home Depot project has completed an Environmental Impact Review and is waiting for a hearing in front of the Planning Commission.

After the task force was formed in August 2004, Lennar proposed a redevelopment of the SeaPort Marina Hotel site, between Pacific Coast Highway and Marina Drive south of Second Street. The mixed retail and residential project has begun its EIR, but is not expected to have a draft ready until next year.

A primary concern already expressed by residents for all the projects is increased traffic congestion at the intersection of Pacific Coast Highway and Second Street — which already is rated as the most congested in the city. One solution proposed during previous studies has been the "Studebaker cut-through," continuing Studebaker Road around the Marketplace center and connecting with PCH to the south. That idea, though, would cut through some of the prime

potential wetlands area.

From 7 to 9 p.m. on Oct. 5, a Wednesday, the study group will accept comments from the public at a forum planned for the Will Rogers Middle School auditorium. The school is at the corner of Monrovia and Appian Way, near Colorado Lagoon.

The comments will be recorded by the city's Community Development Department for future study.

For more information or to make a comment about the area, call 570-6439. The Study Group has not set a deadline to offer its recommendations.

Wetlands

I am pleased that the Bixby Ranch Co. has decided to withdraw the sale of their property near The Marketplace in Long Beach ["Oil wetlands removed from sale," Page 1, March 19].

Despite the fact that it is populated with oil pumps and derelict buildings, I find its appearance, especially the untrimmed palm trees, quite an appealing exception to the normal, one-size-fits-all housing developments or shopping centers that would quickly replace it were it actually sold.

Frank Groff, a man with vested interests in the businesses at or near Second and PCH, could not be more wrong in calling this area an eyesore and wishing for a housing development to attract shoppers to businesses such as the Marina Pacifica shopping center. The Marina Pacifica is an eyesore, not the Bixby property.

TOM DOYLE
Seal Beach

Long Beach Area

beachcomber

Volume XIII Number 17 August 19, 2005

Design Center Proposed for East LB

By Cindy Frye

For those of us who live, work or travel in the southeastern portion of Long Beach, the AES Alamitos electric generating plant and tank storage facility along Studebaker Rd. is a familiar site.

The facility sits between Loynes Dr. and 2nd St. and has remained virtually untouched for decades. That possibly is going to change as a result of a proposed development that would convert more than 16 acres of the tank "farm" into a retail-commercial development that could generate more than \$2.5 million in sales tax revenue its first five years for the City of Long Beach's coffers.

Touting itself as the "Neighbor of Choice," Home Depot is proposing to anchor the 16.7 acre site with a 139,529 square-foot Home Depot Design Center that caters more toward interior design and includes a 34,643 square-foot garden center. The center "is designed to attract interior design clientele" and is "not a contractor-ori-

ented store," according to documents that have been circulating among city planning and business groups. Also proposed for the site is a 6,000 square-foot restaurant and about 12,000 square feet of retail space.

Although the project would give the old tank farm an extreme makeover and bring some much-needed revenue to the money-strapped general fund, residents living near the site are worried about a number of issues they believe would be detrimental to their quality of life.

The project's Environmental Impact Report completed its public circulation process in June and as a result, garnered more than 130 public comments, most of them against the project.

The *Beachcomber* reviewed the comments, finding a number of common concerns from those living in University Park Estates, the Seal Beach neighborhood of College Park West and those living in nearby Spin-

Continued on page 9

Design Center Proposed for East LB

Continued from page 1

naker Bay and parts of Naples and College Park.

The concerns of the residents include increased traffic in and around their neighborhoods, including the potential of increased congestion at the off ramp at Studebaker Rd. and the 22 freeway, wetlands destruction, toxic dump leakage, concerns about another "big box" retailer coming to the area and destroying the "ambiance of the community," noise during construction and the potential impact of the Seaport Marina project at PCH and 2nd St.

Residents living in the University Park Estates neighborhood near Cal State Long Beach, better known as "The Hole," are fearful that the residential streets in their tract will be used as a short cut, which, according to some, is already the case for trucks delivering goods to Ralphs at Bellflower Blvd. and 7th St. Other issues expressed as worrisome by residents is the prospect of day laborers hanging around outside the home-improvement store looking for work, safety issues for area residents and fire and police protection being impacted.

"This is no place to put a commercial development surrounded by an electricity plant," said Don Gill, who

has lived in the University Park Estates area for more than 40 years. He believes the project "is ill-advised" and could be a "harmful threat" to all his neighbors. He said he believes the danger of a terrorist attack on an electricity facility that supplies about half of Los Angeles County with its power is a real concern and should be addressed.

A petition signed by 283 residents living in the University Park Estates neighborhood agree with Gill that building a Design Center at that location is a bad idea.

However, some of the residents don't see eye-to-eye with Gill or other neighbors on several of the issues.

"I think this is a far better solution than empty, derelict oil tanks," said Mark Bixby, a resident of the upscale neighborhood and one of a minority of its homeowners who supports the project. "It will only add value to the area," he said.

As for the concerns expressed by his neighbors regarding traffic, noise and safety issues, Bixby said the alternatives for the site should be more of a concern than the Design Center proposal. "The alternatives are not any better," Bixby said, explaining that the site is zoned for industrial and to deny the retail project will be more detrimental. "Do you want a nice retail center offering amenities like a

restaurant and retail stores, or do you want an industrial park with a lot more trucks?" he questioned.

One group agrees with Bixby and sees the Design Center project as a good thing for the area. The Spinnaker Bay Homeowners' Association, in a letter addressing the EIR, stated that their homeowners "consider the Design Center ... an improvement to an otherwise ugly area which currently is an eyesore to our neighborhood.

Further, it will generate at least a half a million dollars a year in sales tax revenue for the City of Long Beach and provide a needed service to the immediate area." In addition, the association's Wetlands Study Group supports approving the EIR and does not want to see the project delayed.

Third District Councilman Frank Colonna believes the project needs to be looked at more closely before any decisions are made for the site. He told the *Beachcomber* that putting a project like this in his district along Studebaker Rd. "will be a difficult fit," considering there has been no commercial development of this type East of PCH for years, except for the In-and-Out fast food restaurant at the corner of PCH and 2nd St.

He also is concerned about the issues raised by the community, including traffic, complicated by the unpredictable condition of Loynes Dr., the impact on the adjacent wetlands and the quality of the soil. He said entitlements would need to be obtained by the Design Center before anything moves forward and that the planning department is looking at the way the project would best fit into the area.

Home Depot Design Centers are a relatively new concept in retailing with only three other similar stores in the upscale communities of Anaheim Hills, Brea and West Hills featuring

Waypoints

It's Time For A United Voice In Sacramento

Closed." "No Hunting."
"No Fishing." "Dove
Season Closed." "No
Access." "This Area Closed to
Fishing." "Hunting with dogs
prohibited."

Signs of the future?

With an increasing number of wrongheaded bills being introduced to close off or otherwise prevent hunting and fishing in our great state, most sportsmen and women in California would agree that the interests of those who enjoy outdoor pursuits need a strong, coherent voice in Sacramento.

That is why Assemblymember Lois Wolk (D-Davis) and I have joined together in forming the California Legislative Outdoor Sporting Caucus, a bi-partisan, bicameral organization modeled after and affiliated with the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus in Washington, D.C.

California is home to 274,000 hunters and 2.4 million anglers who spend over \$3.1 billion each year on their outdoor pursuits. This spending supports over 52,000 California jobs, \$1.55 billion in salaries and wages, and over \$274 million in state tax revenue.

Altogether, the spending by sportsmen has a \$5.96 billion ripple effect on California's economy. It is important, therefore, that sportsmen too have a permanent voice in the legislature and the public policy process.

Our first and foremost goals in establishing an

California wildlife and their habitat.

Unfortunately, the anti-hunting and fishing activists have increasingly focused their attention on state legislatures, since that is where the regulatory authority over wildlife is strongest. Until recently, there has been



"It's about time California's outdoor sporting enthusiasts have a formal presence in the state legislature."

— Senator Dennis Hollingsworth

Outdoor Sporting Caucus follow:

- to protect and promote the opportunity of California's public to participate in recreational activities in the wild outdoors — hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities,
- to ensure California sportsmen and women access to public lands,
- to protect the investment by sportsmen in wildlife and fisheries management by safeguarding the integrity of user-fee trust funds and license revenues,
- to support efforts to enhance multiple-use habitat management for wildlife and fisheries,
- to recognize the importance of hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities to our state's economy, and
- to address threats to

sparse coordination among state legislators toward defending against the anti-sportsman agenda.

It is our hope that this caucus and others like it nationally will help present a united defense of our recreational opportunities, pastimes, and livelihoods. While there are many effective voices already advocating for the outdoors in Sacramento, not only can this caucus be a unifying voice for all outdoor pursuits, but also it's a peer's voice directly into the ear of those casting the votes. That's what makes the Outdoor Sporting Caucus hold so much potential.

California Sportsmen spend more annually than the box-office totals of the five highest-grossing movies of all time. More Californians hunt

See WAYPOINTS page A35

Shore, Naples Traffic Patterns To Be Studied

Improved parking and traffic control strategies will be the focus of a city Traffic Engineering Division study of Belmont Shore and Naples.

Third District Councilman Frank Colonna said he called for the study as a result of growing concerns among residents in the Shore about traffic and parking problems.

The city's engineering division has hired Kaku Associates,

a Santa Monica-based transportation engineering firm to conduct the study, which will include gathering traffic data, information from the public, developing alternatives and providing technical analysis and plans.

Public meetings and workshops have yet to be scheduled at this point.

City Traffic Engineer Dave Roseman said the study could

take up to a year to complete and then it will be available to the city and residents.

To be added to the study's mailing list, contact Senior Traffic Engineer Ed Norris, 570-6331.

REAL ESTATE & DEVELOPMENT

June 21-July 4, 2005

Long Beach Business Journal 13

Proposed Home Depot May Go Before Planning Commission in August

The developers hoping to build a Home Depot Design Center on the site of an abandoned tank farm near the intersection of Loynes Drive and Studebaker Road say that the store will primarily attract "weekend warriors" working on home improvement projects. But it's going to take city consultants considerably longer than a weekend to construct responses to written comments on the draft environmental impact report (EIR) on the project.

June 15 was the deadline for members of the public to submit their questions and concerns about the EIR in its current form.

Planning Bureau Manager Greg Carpenter told the Business Journal that he expected the process of preparing responses to the comments to take about a month. He said the project might go before the planning commission in August.

As was previously reported in the Business Journal, not all Eastside residents are convinced that a new Home Depot is the type of renovation their neighborhood needs. Among the primary concerns expressed by opponents of the project are the potential traffic impacts the 157,529-square-foot retail center the store would anchor would have on their upscale neighborhood. Some critics have pointed out that the vol-

umes of traffic studied in the draft EIR don't take into account the potential impact of the Lennar Corporation's proposed residential development at the current site of the Marina Seaport Hotel. Others have questioned the wisdom of building a commercial facility in an industrial area packed with power plants.

Supporters, however, argue that the estimated \$2.5 million in sales tax revenue the Home Depot would generate over its first five years in operation would be a boon for city's ailing general fund.

Because of the controversial nature of the project, whatever decision is made at the planning commission hearing will likely be appealed to the city council. ■

Wet weather not so great for wetlands

By Joe Segura
STAFF WRITER

The mammoth earth mover appears to forage in the sprawling, baked terrain of Bolsa Chica Wetlands. Elegant egrets look on passively, as their sleek frames glide along shrinking patches of water, isolated in 1,247 acres sandwiched between Warner Avenue and Seapoint Street along Pacific Coast Highway in an unincorporated area enveloped by Huntington Beach.

There is considerable contrast between the steely framed equipment and the delicate and endangered birds, but they share a common concern: the future of badly degraded grassy habitat resources for many endangered migrant birds.

To a small army of engineers, biologists and construction workers, the future looks good — in fact, great — because the Bolsa Chica wetlands site is in the process of being restored.

After decades of political battles — on the local, county and state levels — the planets have lined up and the restoration mission is picking up steam under the supervision of Jack Fancher, coastal program chief for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

The agency launched the ambitious restoration effort last October, but winter storms delayed progress.

"The rains have really made a mess of things," Fancher said. "It made it very difficult to do work in the lowlands. It's been an extraordinary year."

The work is getting back on track, and planners estimate that the work will be completed by spring 2006.

Once completed, the wetlands will include a 367-acre basin that will for the first time in more than a century benefit from full tidal action, plus a 200-acre basin that would receive muted tidal action.

That tidal action will become a reality as a result of a giant inlet to be built on the edge of the wetlands site, with a new Pacific Coast Highway bridge being constructed over the inlet to accommodate PCH's north-south traffic.

"The ocean will bring it back to life," Fancher said.

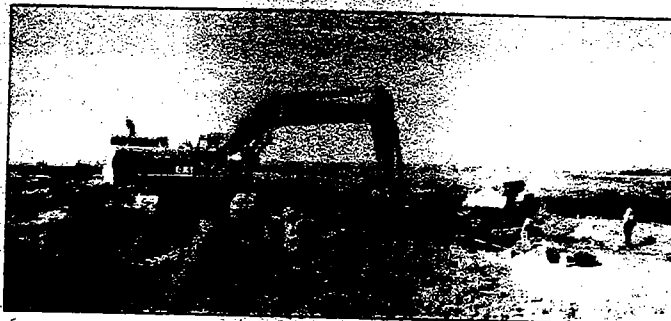
About 1.8 million cubic yards of material — some contaminated by oil operations at the site — will be removed.

Three nesting areas will be developed on



Jack Fancher, a biologist, is the Bolsa Chica Wetlands project manager for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Workers dig out polluted soil that will be hauled away from Bolsa Chica.



366,000 cubic yards, beach nourishment fills will cover 190,000 cubic yards and a full-tidal basin will support 176 acres of non-wetland waters, along with 123 acres of tidal flats and 19 acres of pickle weed.

INSPIRED INLET

The inlet will change the quality of life in the badly damaged Bolsa Chica Wetlands.

It will be 360 feet in width between the jetty crests, under the new PCH bridge to be constructed, and it will be essential to restore full tidal function to the wetlands lowlands.

More than a century ago, Bolsa Chica was part of an extensive tidal marsh that had a direct connection with the ocean. However, it was diked in 1899 to help manage ponds used by a duck-hunting club.

Over the years, oil-production projects resulted in landfills, flood-control facilities

and hydrologic modifications — that led to the degradation of the wetlands over the decades.

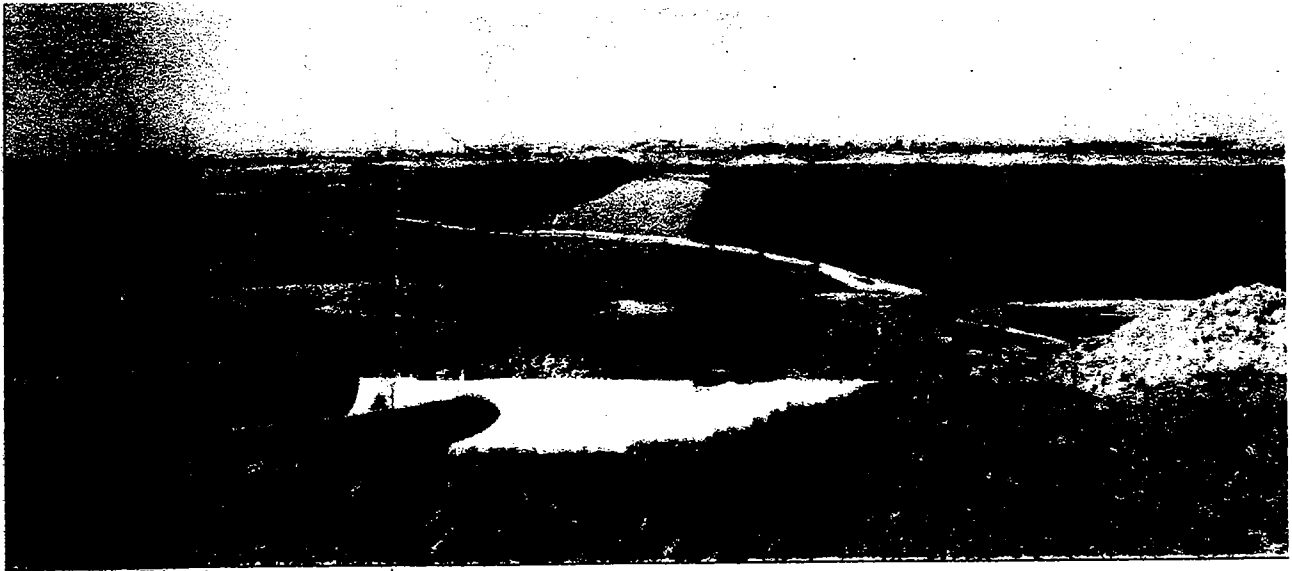
AERA Energy leases the oil well fields, which have been in operation since the 1940s.

During construction of the inlet and its PCH bridge, beach areas about 800 feet north and south will be closed to public access. There could also be loss of parking at Bolsa Chica State Beach.

With the inlet construction — to encompass about 4 acres near the south end of the wetlands' site — the area will once again have its direct connection with the ocean. Each jetty will be about 450 feet in length from the highway to the jetty tips, and each will be about 100 feet at the base — all under water, except at the tip where they meet the surf zone.

"From now to September, it's going to be very busy for us," Fancher said.

The beach area that will have to be exca-



This area is being drained prior to restoration.

vated for the jetty construction and inlet totals about 5 acres.

The California Coastal Commission analysis of the site pinpointed several other major benefits from the inlet project,

including:

- It will increase the quality and quantity of open water and intertidal mud flat habitats for migratory shorebirds, seabirds and waterfowl.

- Fishes and invertebrates will flourish, including a habitat for the California halibut.

BIRDS, BIRDS, BIRDS

In the upland areas, 20 of the 1,247

This area, above, at the rear of the Bolsa Chica Wetlands, will not change much.

ON THE COVER:

Traffic on Pacific Coast Highway takes a detour during construction of a tidal inlet for Bolsa Chica Wetlands.

PHOTOS BY LEO HETZEL / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

acres will be improved to support three nesting habitat islands for the endangered California least tern and the threatened western snowy plover.

Nineteen acres will be restored as a dune community for sensitive species.

The new nesting space will provide habitat for a variety of other birds associated with water, including elegant terns, Caspian terns and Foster's terns.

Enhanced cord grass, a low-salt marsh plant that will flourish in a full tidal range, will support the endangered light-footed clapper rail.

Belding's savannah sparrows also are expected to benefit from the project.

Construction, however, will have temporary negative impacts on both the marine species and breeding habitat.

The nesting sites will be flagged, and no construction will occur within 100 feet of

the nests. Crew members will attend an educational program on threatened and endangered species, and biological monitors will be on site during the breeding season.

The muted tidal flows could damage part of the eucalyptus grove, which is considered an important habitat for a variety of raptors.

FUTURE FEATURES

Oil wells will be removed, although the time frame is in the distant future — anywhere from 30 to 50 years, if not more. Water injection wells, well pads and access roads will be phased out.

To protect nearby homes from rising groundwater, a gravel-filled trench will be built as a barrier between the homes and

PLEASE SEE BOLSA / BW14

A NEW LIFE FOR BOLSA CHICA

After decades of 'approvals and lawsuits,' a \$65-million project to restore the Huntington Beach wetland begins.

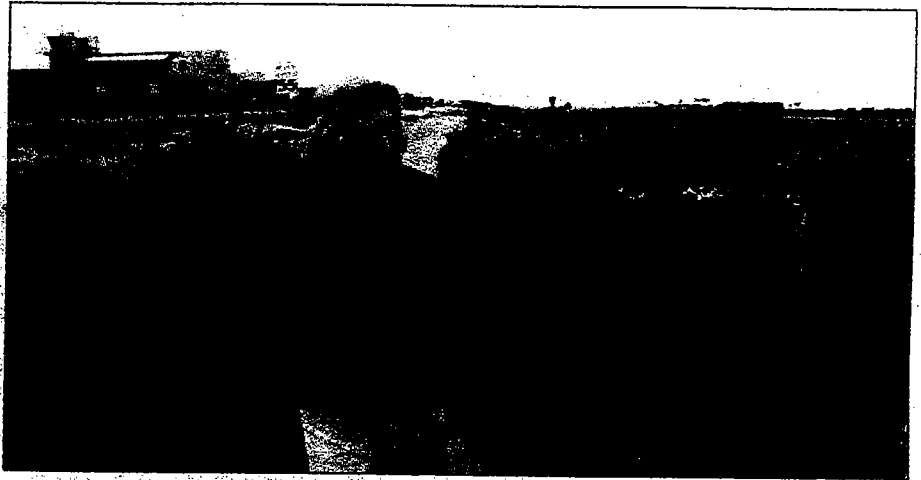
By DAN WEIKEL
Times Staff Writer

In 1980, the real estate arm of Signal Oil Co. revealed its grand vision for Bolsa Chica, a huge salt marsh in Huntington Beach that was dotted with nodding oil rigs and polluted by urban runoff.

Landowner Signal Landmark wanted to build 5,700 homes on 620 acres and commercial development on 252 acres. Private and public marinas with canals leading to a new harbor entrance would round out the project.

Three decades later, the herons, stilts, egrets, brown pelicans, peregrine falcons, snails, stingrays, marsh grass and mudflats are still there. And work is beginning on a \$65-million project to return the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve to its pre-20th century condition — the largest restoration project of its type in Southern California.

It's a heady moment for those who fought an epic battle to preserve the wet-



ROBERT LACHMAN *Los Angeles Times*

ADVOCATE: *Shirley Dettloff walks along a path in the wetland that, as a founding member of Amigos de Bolsa Chica, she helped champion.*

land. After almost 30 years of lawsuits, compromises and dogged grass-roots activism, all that remains of Signal's master plan is 379 homes to be built on 77 acres, far from the water. Most of the company's vast holding — roughly 1,200 acres of marshland — is now set aside as open space and wildlife habitat.

"Over the years, we printed a lot of

'Save Bolsa Chica' bumper stickers. Now, we can say we saved Bolsa Chica." Herb Chatterton, the first president of Amigos de Bolsa Chica, said during a ceremony last week that marked the beginning of the restoration.

The Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve is off Pacific Coast Highway between Warn-
[See Wetland, Page B6]

[Wetland, from Page B1]

er and Seapoint avenues in Huntington Beach. A short walk down a hiking trail or wooden causeway across the first lagoon quickly takes visitors away from the traffic noise on PCH.

Brown pelicans scoop prey from its waters. Egrets stand erect along the muddy shoreline, and hawks live in the tall eucalyptus. Sea bass, halibut and rays can be seen in the lagoons. All told, there are about 200 bird species in the reserve, including several endangered ones.

Before the controversy, builders and the public generally thought of wetlands such as Bolsa Chica as coastal swamps that were better off developed than left as open space.

"Wetlands were viewed as good places for marinas," said Shirley Dettloff, a former Huntington Beach mayor and founding member of Amigos de Bolsa Chica. "The greatest change has been the public's growing appreciation of these places."

The first phase of the restoration involves 584 acres on the southwest side. Millions of cubic yards of sand and sediment will be dredged to create a contoured tidal basin and new inlet through which ocean water can flow in and out of the wetland. Duck hunters dammed the original inlet in 1899, disrupting the tidal action that allows marine life into the marsh and flushes out decaying matter.

Restoration workers also will remove 64 defunct oil wells and 98,000 feet of oil pipeline. Other wells, however, will continue to operate along the periphery of the reserve.

As part of the work, 19 acres of dunes will be rehabilitated with native plants, and 20 acres of nesting area will be created for migratory and marine birds.

Cleanup crews will remove deposits of oil, heavy metals, PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) and mercury that have built up over the decades from oil drilling and urban runoff. A network of levees, drains and pumps will be built to protect bordering homes from high tides and increased water flows.

The 584-acre restoration — to be completed by early 2008 — is proceeding under the direction of a host of state and federal agencies — some that originally supported development of Bolsa Chica. Repairing the entire wetland will occur over 25 years.

Environmentalists say the restoration project is crucial for the state, which has lost about 95% of its coastal wetlands due to pollution, agriculture and encroaching development.

The battle over Bolsa Chica helped educate the public about the impor-

ance of coastal marshes to endangered species, flood control, reducing water pollution and checking erosion. Court cases from the struggle set tough limits for development in wetlands.

"What is really important about Bolsa Chica is that before the wetland was acquired, coastal land was considered too expensive to buy for preservation," said Marcia Hanscom, chairwoman of the Sierra Club's California wetlands committee. "The Bolsa Chica activists refused to take no for answer. They paved the way for these types of purchases statewide."

The saga began in 1970, shortly after Signal Landmark bought 2,000 acres of wetland for \$20 million from heirs of the old Bolsa Chica Gun Club, which operated on the site from 1898 to the 1940s.

The state immediately claimed that 528 acres belonged to it because it was tideland. Signal contended the property had passed into private ownership under an old Mexican land grant. In a 1973 settlement, the state ended up with almost 328 acres, representing the first block of Bolsa Chica to be set aside.

Three years later, a group of Huntington Beach residents founded Amigos de Bolsa Chica, a name suggested by former Mayor Ruth Bailey.

The goal was the preservation and restoration of the salt marsh. "Save Bolsa Chica" became its battle cry. Ironically, the group's initial financial support came from Capt. Charles Moore of Long Beach, an oil fortune heir who gave the organization \$18,000 in Signal Oil stock.

In 1979, with its membership swelling to 2,000, the group sued Signal, the state and Aminoil, which had acquired oil rights in the wetland. The Superior Court lawsuit contested the state's 1973 settlement with Signal and sought penalties for filling, diking and degrading the Bolsa Chica wetland. Their cause was bolstered in March 1980, when the state Coastal Commission ruled that Bolsa Chica was a wetland and subject to the protections of the Coastal Act.

A year later, Amigos de Bolsa Chica, telegraphing its political clout, sent then-Gov. Jerry Brown a petition signed by 17,000 people who supported wetland preservation.

Then, in 1983, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determined that the wetland was highly productive wildlife habitat, not a degraded swamp, as developers had contended. But legal and legislative battles continued.

In 1989, the fight with Signal finally settled after a decade in court. Leading up to the resolution was the crea-



ROBERT LACHMAN Los Angeles Times

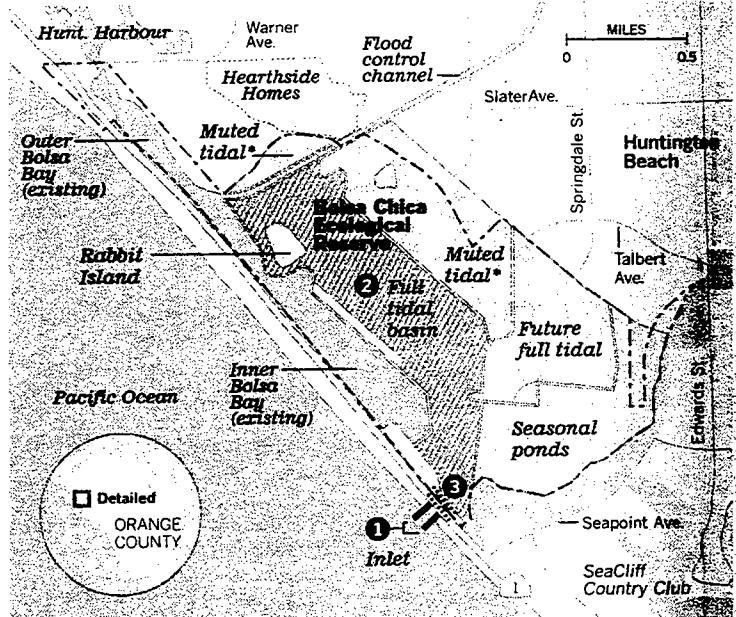
FORAGING: A wetland inhabitant looks for food in the shallow water. The restoration includes the creation of 20 acres of nesting area for migratory and marine birds.

Rebirth

Reconnecting the Bolsa Chica wetland with the ocean is a critical step in returning the area to its natural condition.

Key features of construction

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>1 Inlet and jetties
Two 450-foot-long jetties create an ocean inlet</p> | <p>2 Full tidal basin
2.7 million cubic yards of earth excavated for tidal basin</p> | <p>3 Bridges
Two bridges built over inlet for Hwy. 1 traffic and oil operations</p> |
|---|---|--|



*Muted tidal basins have water flow that is regulated by gates and culverts.

Sources: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; California State Lands Commission

Los Angeles Times

tion of a planning coalition suggested by then-county Supervisor Harriett Wieder. The panel brought all sides together in an attempt to resolve their differences.

After six months of meetings, Signal agreed to shelve its ambitious housing and marina plan. There would be far fewer homes and no commercial development, 900-foot-wide harbor entrance, or channel to Huntington Harbour. At a minimum, 1,000 acres of wetland would be spared from development.

"It was very frustrating," said Raymond J. Pacini, chief executive officer of California Coastal Communities, the parent company of Signal Landmark. "It was approvals and lawsuits followed by more approvals and lawsuits."

The state eventually purchased 880 acres of Bolsa Chica from Signal for \$25 million, bringing the total acreage under public ownership to about 1,200. The sale was made possible by the ports of Los Angeles and Long

Beach, which have contributed almost \$90 million to the restoration effort. The money is compensation for wetlands destroyed by port expansion.

While the fight for the lowlands cooled, a new group emerged in the early 1990s — the Bolsa Chica Land Trust. It began pushing for preservation of the wetland's surrounding mesas, where Signal sought to build more than 1,000 homes.

By spring 1999, a lawsuit by the group and its allies had overturned earlier Coastal Commission decisions and set further limits on the use of fragile wetlands as well as environmentally sensitive habitat. Since then, California Coastal Communities has agreed to sell 103 acres of the mesa to the state for \$65 million. The purchase, which has not yet been completed, will be funded by Proposition 50, a 2002 initiative that will provide \$3.4 billion for environmental projects.

The developer is still planning to

build 379 homes and a park on 105 acres that flank the preserve in an area known as the upper mesa. The Coastal Commission is scheduled Wednesday to consider the project — the last remaining skirmish in the Bolsa Chica saga.

Commission staff members have recommended against approval of the project because of potential effects on marine water quality and environmentally sensitive habitat for the southern tar plant and the burrowing owl. They also are concerned that the development would limit access to recreational areas in Bolsa Chica.

If the project is not approved, company officials say, they are prepared to pull out of the pending deal to sell the 103 acres of mesa property.

"This is a classic example of government regulation that is out of control," Pacini said. "We are trying to do the right thing. We have a project that complies with the Coastal Act. It is the most modest plan ever offered for Bolsa Chica."

Is Home Depot Design Center Best Fit For Fixer-Upper Corner On Eastside?

■ By CHAD GREENE
Staff Writer

It's no stretch to call the 16.7-acre parcel east of the intersection of Loynes Drive and Studebaker Road a fixer-upper. But not all of the residents across the Los Cerritos Channel in University Park Estates are convinced that a new Home Depot is the type of renovation their neighborhood needs.

The two Long Beach residents who own the property as Studebaker LLC have proposed transforming an abandoned tank farm – a relic from the days when Southern California Edison owned the nearby power plants – into a 157,529-square-foot, mixed-use retail facility anchored by a Home Depot Design Center. If the project ultimately wins approval, the 139,529-square-foot store would be the home-improvement chain's first in Long Beach.

But that's not due to a lack of trying. Rick Greene, a real estate manager for Home Depot, says that the Atlanta-based retailer has been trying to secure a site in Long Beach for years. Customer demand in the area is so high that Home Depot is currently building its second store in Signal Hill.

"We are looking at this site as an opportunity to finally enter and serve Long Beach," Greene says.

In response to concerns voiced last year by residents of the neighborhood known among locals as "The Hole," Home Depot has announced plans to make the proposed East Long Beach store one of its so-called "Design Centers," which focus on remodeling products oriented more toward homeowners than contractors. Some Eastsiders had said they were concerned that the presence of a large number of contractors would attract day laborers to the affluent area.

The primary concern of both those who support the proposed project and those who oppose it, however, is increased traffic through the area. Developers have pledged to make more than \$1 million in improvements to the surrounding grid, including technology to synchronize the traffic signals on Studebaker Road between 2nd Street and the onramp to the 22 Freeway, on Pacific Coast Highway between Studebaker and 7th Street and on 2nd Street between Marina Drive and Studebaker Road.

Critics such as University Park Estates Neighborhood Association President Janice Dahl say that isn't nearly enough. Loynes Drive, which would provide the most direct approach to the proposed center, is simply not equipped to deal with the

Please Continue To Top Of Next Page

Home Depot Project

Continued From Page 3

level of traffic a Home Depot would bring to the area, she says.

"It's not an arterial street," Dahl says. "Our objection isn't to Home Depot, it's to the location."

Dahl criticizes the draft environmental impact report (EIR) on the project for containing "conclusions based on exclusions." The volumes of traffic studied, for instance, don't take into account the potential impact of the Lennar Corporation's proposed residential development at the current site of the Marina Seaport Hotel, she says.

Dahl believes that the estimated \$2.5 million in sales tax revenue the Home Depot would generate for the City of Long Beach over its first five years in operation wouldn't even cover its impacts on police, fire and public works services in the area.

"That \$2.5 million in five years, we're going to be in the hole," she says. "Home Depot is going to be a huge liability."

Other Eastside residents, however, don't see it that way. Mark Bixby says that the additional sales tax revenue would be a boon for the city, and the current design of the retail center is certainly a more attractive alternative than the site's current tenant.

"I like it better than empty oil tanks," Bixby says. "I think that any good retail center adds value to a surrounding residential neighborhood – as long as the impacts are not too great."

Like Dahl, Bixby is concerned about the possibility of "cut-through traffic" – motorists zipping down residential streets such as Margo Avenue or Silvera Avenue in order to circumvent more congested thoroughfares on their way to Home Depot.

\$3 MILLION FROM SENATE

Restoration At Wetlands Closer With More Money

By Harry Saltzgaver
Executive Editor

Lobbying in Washington D.C. has brought another \$3 million into the war chest to purchase and restore Los Cerritos Wetlands in Long Beach.

That \$3 million is in the Senate appropriations bill as part of the National Ocean Service budget. That's where a new federal program to provide matching grants to purchase land for coastal conservation can be found.

"I've been told by Senators Diane Feinstein and Barbara Boxer that, because it is included in the Senate appropriations bill, there is a high likelihood that it will be there when the budget is passed," said Third District Councilman Frank Colonna. "It's part of an emphasis to restore wetlands on a national scale."

This is the second big win for the wetlands — and the city's legislative affairs committee —

in Washington, Colonna said. Earlier this summer, Congressman Steve Horn successfully added \$2 million to the House budget for wetlands restoration.

"It's something we've been working on for 18 months," Colonna said. "This kind of thing is what the legislative affairs committee is all about."

Colonna chairs that commit-

tee. Other members are Dan Baker (Second District) and Rob Webb (Eighth District).

The \$3 million for land purchase now puts the pot for the wetlands at \$15 million. The state government has set aside \$12 million through the Coastal Conservancy to help buy the land.

The Bixby Ranch Company owns much of the wetlands, which stretch along Pacific Coast Highway on both sides of

Westminster. Bixby Ranch has begun the environmental studies necessary to develop about half of its 181 acres, but also has been negotiating with the Coastal Conservancy and the Trust for Public Land to sell the wetlands.

Another section of the wetlands, known as the Bryant Ranch, could be purchased as well, Colonna said. He declined to speculate on how much the purchase and restoration efforts would cost, but said it could be in the \$20 million to \$25 million range.

The Coastal Conservancy's work plan for the Los Cerritos Wetlands lists land acquisition costs at about \$25 million. However, that includes about 100 acres on the Hellman Ranch in Orange County.

That price may not include the cost of acquiring surface rights and relocating oil-pump-

ing operations that now dot much of the wetlands area. A restoration plan that included consolidating all of the oil operations on five acres in the middle of the wetlands made it all the way to the state Coastal Commission last year before being turned down.

"We're very close to completing negotiations for a site adjacent to the wetlands where there could be slant drilling," Colonna said. "If we can get the site, then we would have to get the state Lands Commission and the Coastal Commission to approve the oil operation. But I think it is doable."

Even with the addition of the federal money, \$15 million likely isn't going to be enough to purchase and restore the Bixby Ranch land, let alone the Bryant Ranch parcels, Colonna admitted. He said talks have begun with the Port of Long Beach to have them make up the difference, receiving development mitigation credits in return.

by environmental mitigation. In the past, the Port of Long Beach has helped purchase or restore wetlands in Bolsa Chica and further south to earn credits for construction.

While the Coastal Conservancy, a state agency, still is involved in attempts to purchase the wetlands and coordinate restoration plans, the national Trust for Public Lands has taken over negotiations with Bixby Ranch Company. Colonna said an updated appraisal must be done before the purchase could be completed.

If, as expected, the \$3 million stays in the federal budget when it is approved, it will be held in trust until the purchase is complete. The \$12 million in state money more than qualifies for matching purposes.

"I hope it can happen in 12 to 18 months," Colonna said. "We've never been closer. With the federal money available now and the state money already in

hand, we actually have the resources to make it happen. That's exciting. All the waterfront construction at the port must be accompanied

Federal Money Might Aid Cerritos Wetlands

By Kurt Helin

Editor

East Long Beach's Los Cerritos Wetlands may get millions of dollars for restoration from the federal government in a bill now on the President's desk for signature.

The Estuary Habitat and Chesapeake Bay Restoration

Act of 2000 designates the Los Cerritos Wetlands as a "top priority" for acquisition and restoration of the former wetlands. This could provide the impetus to finish a deal that diverse groups — from local environmentalists to federal officials — have been working on for years.

The Los Cerritos Wetlands are 400 acres of former wetlands in east Long Beach. The Bixby Ranch Company owns the key portion of 181 acres, land the Bixby family and companies have owned for a century. That parcel is east of Pacific Coast Highway and bisected by West-

(Continued on Page 35A)

November 2, 2000

GRUNION GAZETT

Wetlands

(Continued from Page 1A)

minster Avenue. It includes the land behind the Marketplace and across from Marina Pacifica. Other property owners own surrounding properties in similar condition.

About 25 acres of that land is functioning wetlands — the rest is vacant and dotted by oil rigs. Oil was discovered there in 1926, and the channelization of the San Gabriel River combined with the introduction of oil wells changed the face of the land from wetlands to its current state.

Bixby Ranch has plans on the drawing board to develop the site, although they are negotiating to sell rather than develop. Their plans call for 104 acres of restored wetlands at the northeast end of the site, paid for by Bixby. Another 48 acres, along Pacific Coast Highway near Westminster, would have a townhome housing project similar to the Bixby Village project. There would be 524 two-story buildings with a Mediterranean style.

Several years ago, area environmentalists formed a task force to push for the entire area to be restored to wetlands. Among its accomplishments, the group put the issue on the front pages and got a wide group of city, state and federal officials looking for ways to convert the entire property back to wetlands.

Last year the state Coastal Conservancy and Bixby Ranch signed an option agreement that would have the agency buy and restore the entire 181-acre site to wetlands. Money to purchase and restore the land

Beach, which would receive environmental mitigation credits for expansion it is undertaking.

However, part of that deal called for the Samedan Oil Company to be able to condense the oil operations on the land to one five-acre parcel in the middle of the restored land. In August the state Coastal Commission said the oil plan would damage the surrounding wetlands and shot down the proposal — to the cheers of environmental groups.

That refusal gave Bixby the option to cancel its deal with the Coastal Conservancy. However, it did not take that step.

Federal money might help reopen that process. Congressman Steve Horn pushed for Los Cerritos to be considered a priority in the legislation.

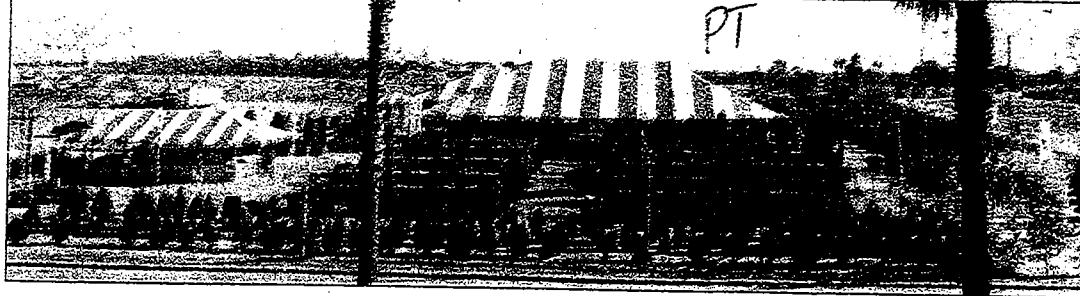
"Los Angeles County has lost more than 93% of its coastal wetlands," Horn said in a released statement. "The Los Cerritos Wetlands are one of only three remaining areas of coastal wetlands that have the potential to become a diverse, high-quality ecosystem and could provide our local schools and universities with valuable resources for science and education research."

While negotiations between the Coastal Conservancy and Bixby continue, the federal money opens doors to find ways to bring circulation to the restored wetlands, said Third District Councilman Frank Colonna. Those could include using San Gabriel River water, which is how the wetlands existed his-

torically, and raising Westminster (the street) up on stilts so water could flow beneath it, Colonna said.

"What we're looking at are several sources of funding, which gives us the chance to add enhancements," Colonna said. "As long as we have a willing seller at the table, and it appears we do, we're looking to complete the deal."

As of Tuesday, the bill was on the president's desk, and he is expected to sign it into law.



The Bixby Ranch Co. is ignoring a Coastal Commission warning that a Christmas tree lot at 6695 PCH has to be removed because it sits on a wetlands site. *Béatrice de Géa / Press-Telegram*

Tree lot at center of fuss

Wetlands: Land developer plans to ignore warning from Coastal Commission.

By Will Shuck
Staff writer

LONG BEACH - The Bixby Ranch Co. says it will ignore a California Coastal Commission warning that the company is

breaking the law by operating a Christmas tree lot on disputed wetlands property it owns in the southeast corner of Long Beach.

The commission says Bixby should have obtained a permit

and that it could face \$15,000-a-day fines if it fails to do so.

But Stewart Honeyman, Bixby senior vice president, says the commission is off base and has no jurisdiction over the temporary tree lot, and he has no intention of shutting down

PLEASE SEE **BIXBY / A16**

BIXBY: Yule tree lot to stay

CONTINUED FROM A1

the lot or filing for a permit.

"I couldn't believe it when this thing arrived on my desk," Honeyman said. "This is absolutely just complete harassment of a property owner."

Honeyman says Bixby Ranch received permission from the city of Long Beach to rent the parcel at Pacific Coast Highway and Studebaker Road, behind the Marketplace shopping center, to Snowy Pines Christmas Trees.

But the commission says Long Beach doesn't have a right to grant such permission. The land, part of Bixby's nearly 200-acre Los Gerritos Wetlands, is one of several sites in Long Beach that require commission OK before any development, said Pam Emerson, the commission's South Coast Area enforcement supervisor.

Emerson said the city has yet to receive the Coastal Commission's approval for a state-required local coastal plan, the document that states how a city will use coastal property.

"This is far-fetched and face-tious," Honeyman said of the commission's order. "I thought it was a joke that somebody in the company had come up with."

ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION:

CHRISTMAS TREE LOT

The Bixby Ranch Company says the Coastal Commission shouldn't object to temporary tree lot on disputed wetlands.



He said the notice of violation he received earlier this week "is a classic example of how this Coastal Commission is out of control."

"This would be a problem if this was a wetlands, but this is not a wetlands," Honeyman said. "You

know what it is? It's the former Long Beach dump site."

Whether the land is a sensitive wetland, or even a salvageable wetland, said Emerson, "is a subject under a great deal of public and scientific debate."

The Coastal Commission's warning follows months of complaints by local environmentalists over what they say is a systematic effort by Bixby to encroach on and erode the wetlands. The people who complained about the tree lot are the same people who late last month protested the mowing of wetland growth, said Ann Cantrell, a member of the Wetlands Task Force, an activist group.

In October, task force members complained of a pumpkin patch operated on the same site, Cantrell said.

"The whole point of this is, every time they encroach a little bit more, we lose that open space and that habitat space," she said. "I think this is very arrogant of them."

Emerson said the notice of violation was intended to get Bixby's attention - to get the company to the table to "figure out what to do next."

Conservation Corner

By Mary Parsell, Conservation Chair

The Conservation Committee continues to work on local issues as well as state and national issues as they come up.

Los Cerritos Wetlands:

Several of us attended a public meeting held by a Task Force formed by Third District Councilman, Frank Colonna and made up of local homeowner's associations. The Task Force presented its findings after more than a year of study and the public was invited to give opinions on what they would like to see developed or not developed on the Los Cerritos Wetlands and surrounding areas.

We were so encouraged and energized by the number of speakers who spoke so eloquently and from the heart for their desire for wetlands to remain wetlands. Many consider the wetlands open space that should remain open space and talked about things like what an asset this natural area is to the community and for the children of the community. There were some speakers who wish for development to proceed in the area but they were far and few between at this meeting. Just hearing all the comments from the public was really a shot in the arm!

The Ports of LA and Long Beach has recently expressed a desire to spend some money on Los Cerritos (having spent mitigation credits at places like Bolsa Chica in the past); we hope that there is a way for this to come to pass. Currently, the State Coastal Conservancy has some funds available for purchase but needs matching funds and

more for the purchase to take place.

We continue to have opportunities to help toward the cause of eventual preservation and restoration of the wetlands. Please feel free to call the conservation committee if you would like to know more.

Kayaking in the local Los Cerritos Wetlands

By Donna Bray

I had the pleasure of volunteering on the first kayak tour organized by Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust group recently. After a few minor glitches and some cool morning air, we were treated to a guided tour of the navigable area. I had been in there before, on my own, and am always impressed with this small gem of habitat in our midst. I think the more people that learn about it and experience it for them selves, the better. If you like to kayak, keep watching the newsletter, because perhaps the Chapter will get an opportunity to go on a special field trip in the future. 🐦

California Least Tern, November 2005

California Least Tern, November 2005

*Newsletter of the El Dorado
Audubon Society*

Aug. 5, 04

Builder ponders edge of wetland

By Joe Segura
STAFF WRITER

Environmentalists are mounting a new effort to keep a vacant lot, used seasonally to sell Halloween pumpkins and Christmas trees at the city's eastern border, from being developed.

Environmentalists have sought to restore the 40-acre site as wetland. They claim it is part of a 2,400-acre former tidal marsh.

A proposal has surfaced to build a group of retail stores to be called Marina Shores East Commercial Center.

Stewart Honeyman, a senior vice president for Bixby Ranch Co., was not available for comment. He has argued that the site is not wetlands, and that environmental agencies have no jurisdiction over the land.

Don May, president of Earth Corps, said plans had been in the works for the site since a Home Depot was pegged for it several years ago, but a July 26 hearing caught many of the interested environmentalist organizations off guard.

Environmentalists asserted there had been a lack of reasonable notification. A new session to discuss the city's Notice of Preparation is set for 6 p.m. Aug. 9 at the Long Beach Aquatic Center, 5875 Appian Way, just south of the Second Street bridge.

May said wetland sites are crucial in the biology of California's coast, providing or nourishing nurseries for aquatic wildlife, a central resource for the state's struggling commercial and sport fishing industries.

In recent years, environmentalists have challenged the use of the disputed wetland for selling pumpkins and Christmas trees. The California Coastal Commission threatened to cite Bixby Ranch Co.

According to Coastal Commission analyst Chuck Posner, critics can appeal any development to the Coastal Commission, because the site is within 300 feet of the estuary.



Bixby Ranch Co. has put a 180-acre chunk of prime real estate on the market, laying the foundation for what promises to be a land grab and a contentious battle between environmentalists and any potential developer.

The property is bordered by Studebaker Road, Pacific Coast Highway and Second Street and sits next to the Long Beach Marketplace in an affluent marina district. It is mostly a degraded wetland site, and environmentalists vows to have it upgraded to a lush ecosystem with no future development.

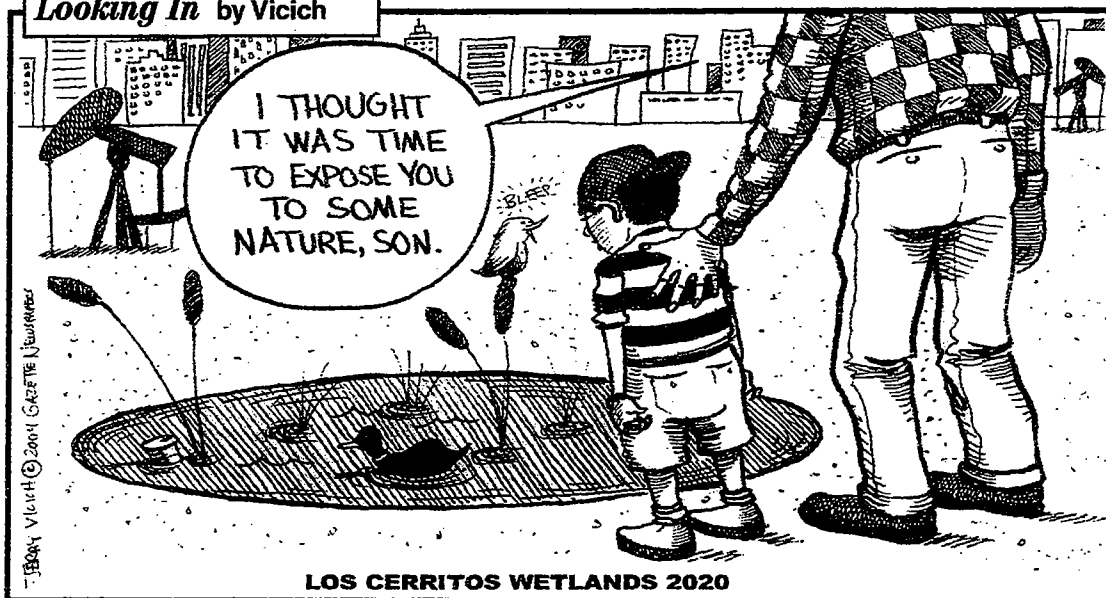
8/22/04
SEE BUSINESS MONDAY

TE COMMENTARY

Grunion Gazette

August 5, 2004

Looking In by Vicich



New Developments Revive Old Wetlands Debate

p. 1

Marina Shores Mirror Center Starts Process

By Amy Bentley-Smith
Features Editor

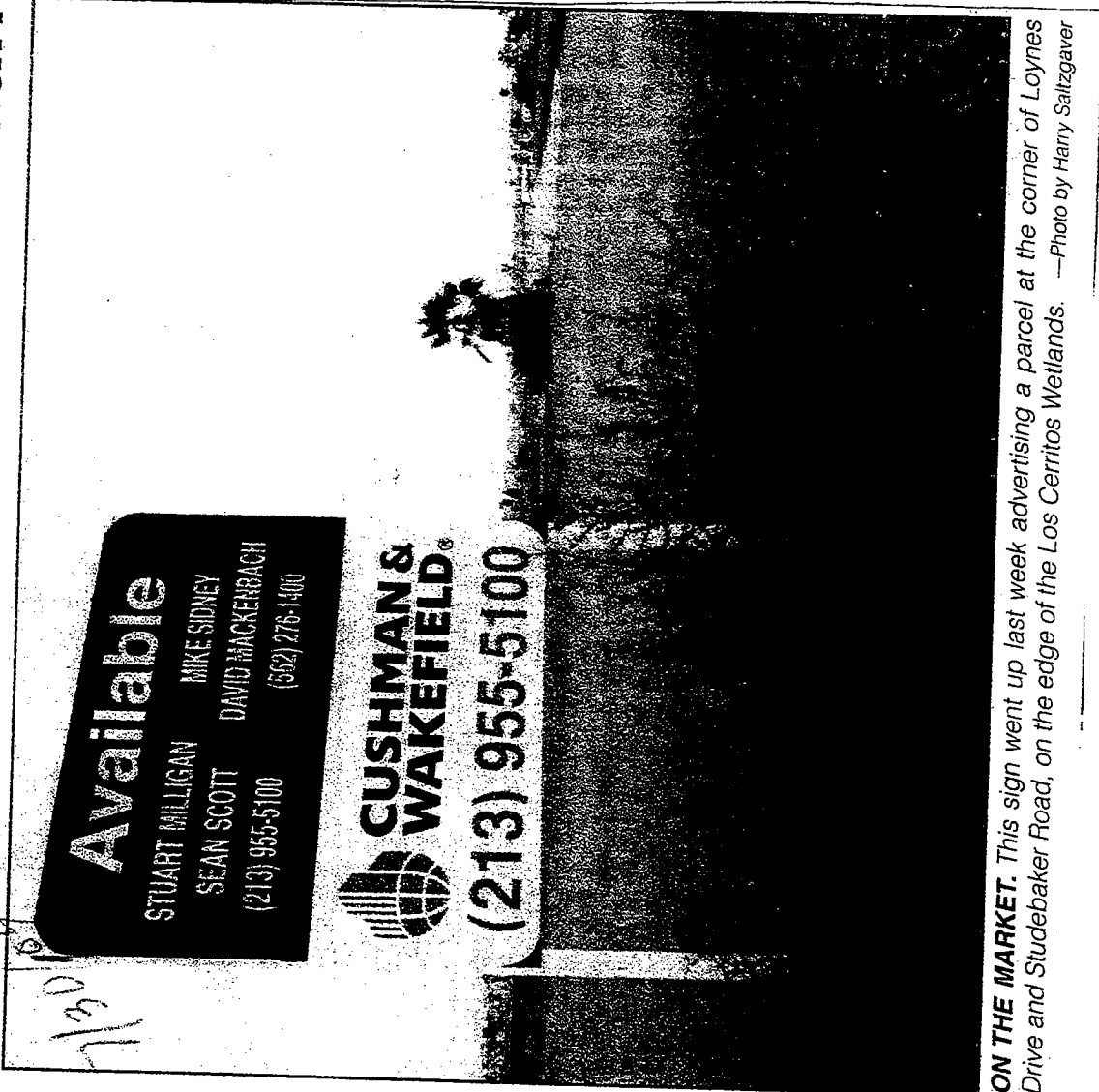
A commercial development proposed on formerly designated wetlands has environmentalists upset.

Rich Development out of Mission Viejo is in escrow to purchase 7.05 acres of undeveloped land owned by Bixby Ranch Company at Pacific Coast Highway and Studebaker Road for a 70,000-square-foot commercial center it's calling Marina Shores East. Monday night, the city's Planning Department conducted a meeting to determine the scope of an Environmental Impact Report required for the project.

That meeting drew the attention of members of the grass-roots organization Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust. The trust has earmarked the site — most recently used as a pumpkin patch and Christmas tree lot during the holidays — as part of Los Cerritos Wetlands land it

(Continued on Page 47A)

Grunion Gazette
July 29, 04



ON THE MARKET. This sign went up last week advertising a parcel at the corner of Loynes Drive and Studebaker Road, on the edge of the Los Cerritos Wetlands. —Photo by Harry Saltzgraver

Cont'd on back

Marina Shores

(Continued from Page 1A)

wants to see restored, said member Don May.

May has a long history with the site. In the early 1980s he filed the first of seven complaints with the Army Corps of Engineers against Bixby Ranch Company for filling in the then-designated wetlands area. While the area is no longer delineated as wetlands, the wetlands trust has continued to consider it as part of the whole of the Los Cerritos Wetlands restoration project. Most recently, May opposed the pumpkin patch/tree lot uses because, he said, they set a precedent for the land's use as commercial property, which would make it more difficult to acquire at a reasonable price for restoration. The sale of the property creates a much worse situation, he said, adding he was shocked to hear about it.

"We've been patiently sitting back waiting while the Trust for Public Lands and the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (negotiated with Bixby Ranch to buy the wetlands for restoration)," May said. "Now all of the sudden we find we're (i.e. Rich) in escrow. I suspect they paid more than (what it's worth as restored wetlands)."

But Tuesday, Third District Councilman Frank Colonna, who sits on the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and who has sought restoration of the Los Cerritos Wetlands since he took office six years ago, disagreed with May.

pressed disappointment that notice only went out late last week and to very few of them. Acting Community and Environmental Planning Officer Angela Reynolds said the meeting was legally noticed as required, but she did agree to another scoping meeting in two weeks.

People in attendance Monday — May and local environmentalists Diana Mann, Ann Cantrell, Ann Dennison and Adrea Stoker — went ahead and provided their comments on what the EIR should address. They included everything from what impacts the project would have on endangered birds that nest at the site to potential hazardous materials in the soil from when the site was used as a dumping ground.

Traffic also was a major concern, especially in light of proposed plans for another large

commercial project anchored by The Home Depot at Studebaker and Loynes. Pacific Coast Highway and Second Street is one of the most congested intersections in the city, Reynolds admitted.

An EIR is required for the project under the California Environmental Quality Act. A draft EIR should be available for further comment sometime in October, after which the final EIR would go to the Planning Commission for certification.

People can give their comments of what the EIR should address at the second scoping meeting (tentatively scheduled for 6 p.m. Monday, Aug. 9, at the Explorer Sea Scout Base, 5875 Apian Way), e-mail to angela_reynolds@longbeach.gov, or in writing to Angela Reynolds, 333 W. Ocean Blvd., 5th Floor, Long Beach, 90802, by Aug. 20.

Activists Protest Planned Development in Southeast LB

Cindy Frye

Preparations are under way for a 5-acre commercial center at the corner of Pacific Coast Highway and Studebaker Road near the San Gabriel River in Southeast Long Beach. The Marina Shores East Commercial Center is planned to include 70,000 square feet of space consisting of two restaurants and 10 retail buildings and 345 parking spaces. The center replaces sporadic seasonal uses and, to the chagrin of some, rare and protected species.

For years the vacant property has been leased from the Bixby Ranch Company to Abe Furlow, proprietor of Pa's Pumpkin Patch. The land has been in escrow for about three years and planned to be developed by Rich Development Company, which about four years ago devel-

oped the Marina Shores Shopping Center anchored by Wild Oats Market, Boater's World and Petco on the Alamitos Bay side of PCH across from the site.

The seven-acre site has sat empty for years, occupied only by the seasonal selling of pumpkins, Christmas trees and carnival enjoyment. Prior to that, from 1960 to 1961 Bixby Ranch leased about three acres of the site to City Dump and Salvage, Inc. of Long Beach to dump waste.

Today, the former estuary that was once a California Least Tern nesting site is currently home to about three acres of the Southern Tarplant and the declining Coulter's Goldfield, along with other special status species such as Heliotrope and Pickelweed and has been

continued from page 1

habitat for the California Wandering Skipper and Big Eyed flies. The Southern Tarplant, for instance, is severely declining and the few remaining sites in San Diego, Orange and Los Angeles counties are threatened by increasing recreational uses and development. The

plant, which is more like a weed, is long and "hairy" with spine-tipped leaves and yellowish-orange flowers that bloom between June and November. The brightly flowering Coulter's Goldfield also is rapidly declining in Southern California.

On top of that, it appears that something gooey is leaking from the site into the San Gabriel River.

Not to let something of this nature fly under the radar, a group of local environmental activists conducted a sign-welding protest on Thursday, Aug. 12, letting evening commuters along PCH between Seal Beach and Long Beach know the plight of the disappearing plant species and to bring attention to the

apparent leaking of liquids from the site into the river. They claim the site is conducive to being a wetlands area and want it protected from development.

According to a letter sent to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services by California Earth Corps President Don May to address the situation, he claims about half of the Southern Tarplant vegetation has been scrapped off and on Aug. 8 Abe Furlow was seen spraying the remaining plants and habitat at the site with herbicide.

"There's nothing I can do about it," said Angela Reynolds, the environmental officer for the City of Long Beach. "I called Bixby Ranch to tell them to get a hold of the lessee and tell him (Furlow) to stop," she said. Reynolds said although the site is "pretty barren," the botanicals have been documented.

As for the leakage at the site, Reynolds told the *Beachcomber* that she has been informed by the environmentalists that oil is leaking from underground pipes but said she is not aware there are hazardous materials. She said the city is requiring the developer to complete an extensive site assessment including more borings.

Stewart Honeyman, senior vice president with Bixby Ranch, said the leak is oil from Chevron pipelines and is currently being addressed. He said there are no hazardous liquids oozing from the site into the river. "Chevron has responded to the fact that a pipeline easement between the river and our property is leaking. They responded immediately," Honeyman said. He also said the site is a land fill dump, not a wetlands area. He did admit, however, that the back side of the property near the oil fields down a 10-foot drop is considered wetlands. "We don't doubt for a minute we have wetlands near the oil fields," he said.

Honeyman said the site is zoned as a planned development district which allows for flexible development plans but in this case does not include shopping centers. He said the developer has to get an amendment to the zoning, which would have to be approved by the California Coastal Commission.

The city conducted two scoping meetings to garner input from the public and interested parties. The Notice of Preparation is currently in circulation with the comment period ending at 5 p.m. today.

Colonna 10 Create New Work Group

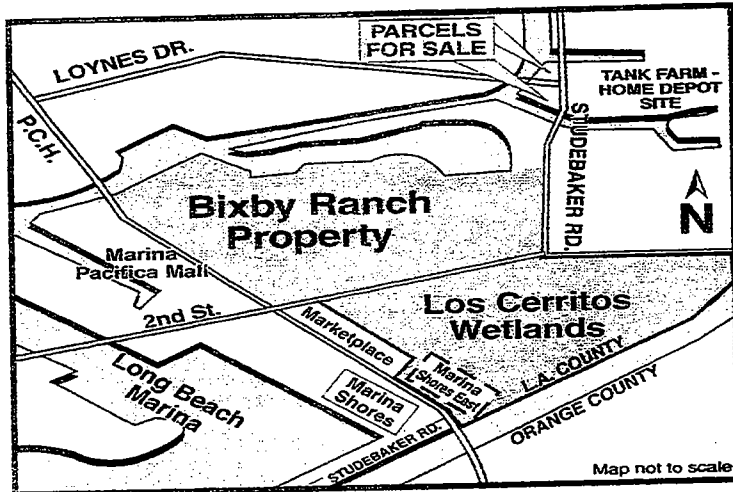
By Harry Saltzgaver
Executive Editor

'For sale' signs are going up the edges of the Los Cerritos wetlands and oil prices have gone through the roof, again spurring efforts to purchase and restore the area.

Add the frustration of neighbors facing a proposed Home Depot on the east side of Studebaker Road, and Third District Councilman Frank Colonna said the area is facing a storm of issues that should be addressed by a new work group. Colonna is forming the Los Cerritos Wetlands/Studebaker Road Work Group based on the same model as the Alamitos Bay Master Plan Study Committee, which made recommendations on land uses around the Alamitos Bay Marina.

Colonna has attempted to facilitate purchase of the wetlands since he was first elected to office six years ago. The state

(Continued on Page 43A)



Wetlands

(Continued from Page 1A)

Trust for Public Lands has acted as the lead agency in the effort, and \$12 million is sitting in an account, waiting to be the state's share of the purchase price for Bixby Ranch Company's 181 acres.

But two appraisals have been done and the parties still are far apart on price. A third appraisal is being considered, Trust officials said.

In the meantime, the price is climbing. The degraded, but still functioning, wetlands on both sides of Second Street west of Pacific Coast Highway surround about 14 functioning oil wells, and the property is bordered by the Marketplace shopping center. Mineral-rights have been added to the negotiations, Colonna said.

Two proposed commercial developments, Marina Shores East on PCH and the Home Depot project on Studebaker, also appear to be driving up land value. Signs have gone up on both corners of Studebaker and Loynes Drive offering those small parcels for development. Colonna said neither parcel is classi-

fied as part of the wetlands, but both border the proposed purchase.

Finally, Colonna wants to revive talk of the "Studebaker cut-through," a plan to continue Studebaker around behind the Marketplace and connecting to PCH south of the shopping center. If the road were put on pilings, the wetlands could be restored, Colonna said, and the traffic congestion at the corner of Second Street and PCH could be eased.

Wetlands Delays

Efforts to save and restore the Los Cerritos Wetlands began in

earnest in the mid-1990s, after Bixby Ranch Company filed a proposed development plan. That plan saved a small portion of the wetlands, but also created a large housing tract with adjacent retail development.

Bixby Ranch began preparing an Environmental Impact Report, including plans to build the Studebaker cut-through. At the same time, environmental groups were waging a large public battle over proposed development of the Bolsa Chica Wetlands area in Orange County, eventually winning major concessions and significantly delaying the project.

After that, attention turned to Los Cerritos. Bixby Ranch Company owns slightly more than half of the remaining wetlands, with a group of smaller owners, led by Hellman Ranch, controlling the rest.

Bixby Ranch officials indicated a willingness to sell the property, but cautioned that they expected to receive fair value for the land. A deal seemed near in 2001, when the Trust for Public Lands had an option for purchase and a proposal to create

an oil island in the middle of the property to consolidate drilling operations was agreed to by both parties.

But environmental activists in Long Beach opposed that plan, and took their complaints to the state Coastal Commission. That group agreed, and said they would not accept the oil plan.

Colonna then led an effort to study slant drilling, which would put actual production outside of the wetlands while still taking the oil from beneath. Tests last year showed that process to be too expensive, though.

"Now I'd like to consider going back to the Coastal Commission again with the original

proposal," Colonna said. "There are different people on the board now, and we have shown that the other option doesn't work."

"We need to look at purchasing the mineral rights, as well as the land. That will be much more expensive, but ..."

Commercial Development

This April, a Home Depot and other retail was proposed on a 18-acre parcel on Studebaker at the end of Loynes Drive. The property currently is home to a tank farm for the nearby drilling operations.

Nearby residents railed over the retail proposal in the industrial area, saying the traffic impact was unjustified. But the a

(Continued on Page 44)

Los Cerritos Wetlands Closer To Purchase

By Harry Saltzgaver
Executive Editor

Purchase and preservation of the Los Cerritos Wetlands in east Long Beach — an effort already six years old — inched forward again recently with a change in the way the land value is being calculated.

Frank Colonna, Third District councilman and vice mayor, said that the land now will be appraised as wetlands instead of developable property, which had been the approach in the past. The state and the Trust for Public Lands had balked at paying

the higher price for developable property. But Bixby Ranch Company, which owns 181 acres of the land at Second Street and Pacific Coast Highway, had prepared a development plan and had sought a higher price to purchase the property.

"That approach has finally changed," Colonna said Monday. "All indications are now that the owners are taking the position that it's not going to get developed, and they are willing to sell.

"The major issues now are the

surface rights and the mineral rights."

Much of the wetlands has become an active oil field, and a consortium of owners have both the mineral rights and some of the land not owned by Bixby Ranch Company. In late 2002, the state Coastal Commission finally approved a plan to slant drill the oil from a piece of property outside of the wetlands, but that work still has not begun.

While the state Trust for Public Lands has agreed to be the agency to negotiate the land purchase, and the state set aside \$12 million in 2001 to help pay for the property, movement has been slow. Colonna, who has worked toward the restoration of the wetlands since he was first elected to the council in 1998, said he will now try to create a joint powers authority with the city, the state and the San Gabriel and Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (which Colonna chairs) to help facilitate the purchase.

"We need an entity to concentrate on this," Colonna said. "We're not anywhere close (to a purchase), and it is frustrating. We will explore a joint powers authority to try to get it off the dime."

Early estimates for purchase of the property and restoration to wetlands status were up to \$25 million. Officials at the Port of Long Beach have indicated a willingness to help pay for restoration as mitigation for port construction, and officials at the Aquarium of the Pacific have expressed interest in being involved. But neither entity is participating in the purchase.

"I'd like to think we could get some movement on this by spring," Colonna said. "But it has become difficult to get anything done on it. We have to just keep trying."

GRASS: Activists challenge Bixby Co.

CONTINUED FROM BW1

"That's outrageous! That's outrageous! That's absolutely outrageous!" said May, president of California Earth Corps.

Stewart Honeyman, senior vice president of Bixby Ranch Co., said the cleared area bordering PCH is not part of the nearby Los Cerritos Wetlands.

"They're basically cleaning up the weeds in the area," he added. "I don't believe there's any violation."

The environmentalists also asserted there was a toxic spill near the San Gabriel River. However, Honeyman said a spill of "an oil-related product" from one of the pipelines triggered a cleanup effort.

"The initial indication is it is a small leak," Honeyman added.

City planners reviewed the retail development plans with the public Aug. 9.

Environmentalists opposed the development, emphasizing their efforts to restore the site as wetland.

Honeyman said the site is approved for development of offices, light industry, a hotel or restaurant — but not for residential units or a shopping center.

The Long Beach Planning Department is preparing an environmental report.

Along with the protest, the environmentalists also lodged complaints with several agencies, including the California Coastal Commission and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

"This former estuary ... was once a California least tern nesting site," May noted in a letter to Fish & Wildlife.



Crews work to contain seepage of oil product alongside San Gabriel River.

Leo Hetzel/Staff Photographer

The environmental activists took their concerns directly to the public Aug. 12, carrying or waving placards protesting the removal of the weeds. They were venting, as many activists do, with an impromptu demonstration that caught the attention of traffic moving along the busy Coast Highway.

Prior to the vegetation destruction, there had been dense Southern tar plant, Coulter's goldfield and other protected plants, including salt marsh heliotrope, jumela, salt grass and pigmy blue and marine blue butterflies. The site is habitat for listed invertebrates such as the California wandering skipper and big eye flies, along with the least terns and pelicans foraging in the river and peregrine falcons, kites, burrowing owls and nesting savannah sparrows, according to May.

Environmentalists protest the spraying of herbicides near Los Cerritos Wetlands.



Leo Hetzel/Staff Photographer

By Joe Segura
STAFF WRITER

normally idle and vacant lot site — considered by environmentalists as a neglected wetland — was a beehive of activity last week. Vegetation had been uprooted on the nearly 8-acre lot in east Long Beach at the northeast corner of Pacific Coast Highway and Shutebaker Road. A possible pipe problem on the eastern edge of the site had prompted a Chevron cleanup consulting team to launch a weeklong effort to keep the spill from

entering the adjacent San Gabriel River. Bixby Ranch Co. owned the site, but has sold it, and there reportedly are plans to build two large retail stores. This proposal also has environmentalists up in arms. While the spill prompted some concern, a small group of environmental activists — led by Diana Mann and Don May — were in a stormy disposition over the vegetation that had been uprooted or killed by a herbicide.

PLEASE SEE GRASS/BW12

Were they weeds or salt grass?

Aug. 19, '04

02/23/25

LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS TASK FORCE



Some Historical Information

Today's Los Cerritos Wetlands total about 300 acres. They are the last of what was the San Gabriel River Estuary covering about 2400 acres. As of 1894, the estuary was made up of flats, salt marsh and tidal lagoons. By 1932, most of the area was being developed into the community of Naples, the Marine Stadium, and more recently, marinas, more housing tracts and strip malls. Although parts of the remaining wetland acres have been leased for oil recovery, many of the original characteristics are still present.

By definition in the Coastal Act of 1976, wetlands are defined as, "Lands within the coastal zone which may be covered periodically or permanently with shallow water and include saltwater marshes, freshwater marshes, open or closed brackish water marshes, swamps, and mudflats," (the wetland components).

A California Department of Fish and Game report in 1981 studied 6 subareas within the Wetlands to identify and catalog these wetland components.

They concluded that preserving the existing wetlands and restoring as much as possible, the degraded components, would benefit all local marine estuarine fishes and invertebrates, waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, and rare and endangered animals.

Because of the scarcity of wetlands in Southern California, the Department felt that acre for acre mitigation was necessary for maximum restoration.

Future Newsletters will include more information about the subarea components and some of the endangered species found within them.

For more information or to join the Task Force, please call 562-448-2600

11/05:
This organization now includes
the Los Cerritos Wetlands Land
Trust
www.LCWlandtrust.org

Conservancy Last Piece Of Wetlands Deal

By Harry Saltzgaver
Executive Editor

Yet another player has joined the quest to purchase and restore the Los Cerritos Wetlands in east Long Beach.

Frank Colonna, Third District councilman and vice mayor, said that the involvement of the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy should be the final

piece in the puzzle to save the wetlands. The conservancy will both be a source of money for the land purchase and a resource to complete the purchase negotiations, Colonna said.

Colonna chairs the conservancy board, and has pushed for its involvement in several Long Beach projects. The councilman has tried to facilitate purchase of the wetlands from Bixby

Ranch Company for four years.

The state, through the Trust for Public Lands, has been negotiating for two years with Bixby Ranch to purchase the 181 acres of wetlands it owns at Second Street and Pacific Coast Highway. In 2001, the state set aside \$12 million for the purchase — about half of the ultimate cost.

(Continued on Page 37A)

March 27, 2003

GRUNION GAZETTE

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

Wetlands

(Continued from Page 1A)

"The problem is that the Trust for Public Lands has been inundated with projects," Colonna said. "I want the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy to take the lead in the purchase negotiations. They have the expertise and the time to get it done."

Tuesday night the City Council approved an agreement with the conservancy to do just that. The staff report on the item noted that "minimal progress towards acquisition has been made by TPL" since the city entered into a confidentiality agreement (required for final negotiations) last August.

Efforts to purchase and re-

store the wetlands have proceeded in fits and starts for several years. Bixby Ranch Company owns much of the land on both sides of Second Street north of PCH. That land is home to several oil operations surrounded by a degraded, but still active, wetlands area.

Bixby Ranch officials had prepared a development plan for the property and begun the environmental impact review process in the late 1990s. The plan preserved some wetlands, but also called for both residential and commercial development.

At the same time, efforts to stop development at Bolsa Chica Wetlands to the south in Orange County became highly publicized. While developers

there fought their way through state Coastal Commission and court hearings, Bixby Ranch officials began negotiating to sell the Los Cerritos property.

The company sold the adjacent Marketplace shopping center in 2001 and signed an option agreement with the Trust for Public Lands for the wetlands. That option has since expired, but negotiations continue.

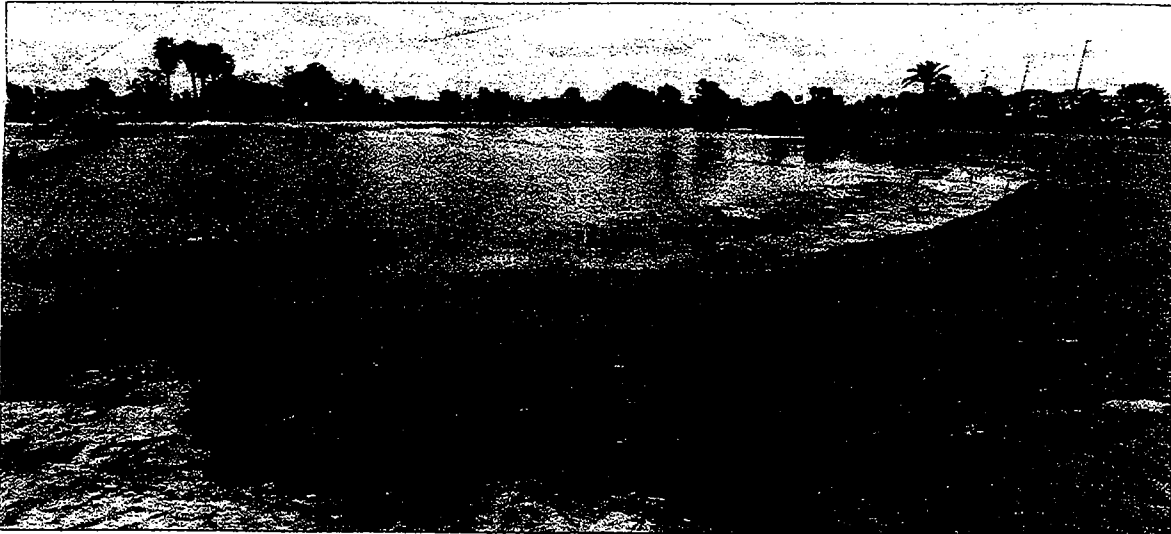
In the last year, the Port of Long Beach has become involved in the talks, showing interest in paying for the wetlands cleanup in exchange for development mitigation credits. The Mountains and Rivers Conservancy, which is financed with about \$60 million from state bond propositions, has begun

paying for acquisition and restoration of open space land in the river watersheds, which includes the Los Cerritos Wetlands.

One oil cleanup plan, which involved consolidating drilling operations on an island in the middle of the wetlands, was rejected last year by the state Coastal Commission. But late last year another proposal to allow slant drilling from a site just outside of the wetlands moved forward. Testing of that approach should occur this year.

"All the parties involved are eager to complete this deal," Colonna said. "If we can get the conservancy involved, it should be the final step in what has become a too-long process."

RECLAIMING NATURE'S PROMISE



The Colorado Lagoon near the corner of Appian Way and Colorado Street is among the dozens of ancient wetlands areas that officials from the city and the state hope to restore.
 Brittany Murray / Press-Telegram

Wetlands restoration will add to L.B. parks

Ecology: Local, state officials seek to bring back lost habitat, increasing green areas through city.

By Paul Young
Staff writer - L.B. Press Telegram

LONG BEACH — It used to be the land of plenty. Tangles of dense, impenetrable wetlands bordered the coast. Gray-and-brown clapper rails frolicked in the muddy marshes. And thousands of southern steelhead and Pacific lamprey spawned in the salty water.

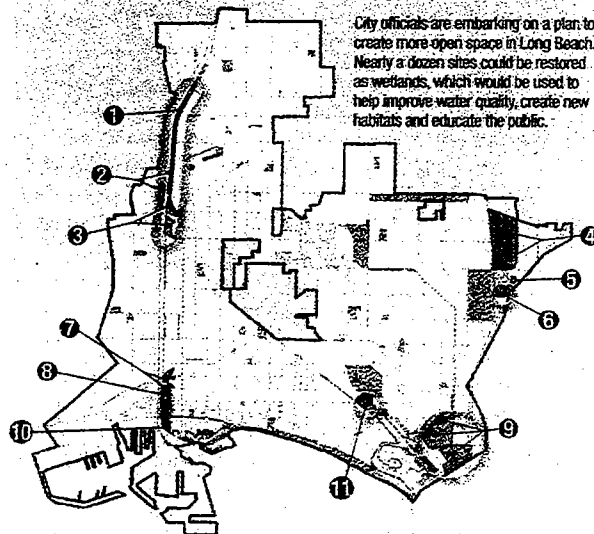
A century later, 95 percent of this once-thriving habitat is gone. Local and state officials are now looking to spruce up the state's fifth-largest city by creating a unique system that would restore its wetlands and bring more green space to the most dense areas of town. The move comes at a time when the public is shifting its attitude about the environment and is pushing to restore its troubled ecosystems.

"We've developed intensely in Southern California and realized that our quality of life depends on restoring things that aren't all human managed," said Joan Hartmann, outreach director for the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project. "It's just more interesting to go to a place that is more naturalized and a little more wild."

At a symposium hosted by the Aquarium of the Pacific last week, about 40 scientists, political leaders and officials resolved to link 11 sites across the city that could be restored as wetlands, then used to help improve water quality, create new habitats and educate the public.

No timeline has been set for the project. But the areas would be part of the city's larger Open Space Plan, approved by the City Council in October. The plan includes improving 40 areas citywide as open space, adding to the 96 parks that already exist here. The hope is to increase the amount of parkland so that no Long Beach

WETLANDS IN LONG BEACH



City officials are embarking on a plan to create more open space in Long Beach. Nearly a dozen sites could be restored as wetlands, which would be used to help improve water quality, create new habitats and educate the public.

1. DeForest Wetlands: 33.6 acres. City owned. The city is preparing for an environmental impact report (EIR) of the area. It secured a \$300,000 grant to conduct a feasibility study to restore wetlands.
2. Dominguez Gap: 49.6 acres. County owned. County project. This is a flood control area that would be turned into wetlands.
3. Whingley Heights: 50 acres. The city owns 2 acres; remainder owned by Oil Operators. Officials will apply in March for \$5 million in Proposition 40 funds, which would give them the money to purchase the property. The area would be used for recreation. Some wetlands would also be created.
4. El Dorado Regional Park: 365.8 acres. City owned. An application for \$380,000 grant will be submitted in March to pay for a study that would evaluate the use of San Gabriel River water to fill park lakes and create a riverine habitat.
5. El Dorado Nature Center: 92.1 acres. City owned. Would include wetlands.
6. El Dorado Wetlands: 7.5 acres. City owned. An application for a grant will be submitted in March to the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy. The grant would be used to restore the El Dorado Nature Center and create wetlands.
7. Chavez (Park) to Drake (Park) Greenbelt: 16.2 acres. Southern Transportation owns 11 acres; remainder is owned by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and a private citizen. A grant application was submitted in June to the California Resources Agency to purchase the property. No decision has been made on the \$6.2 million request. The area would be used primarily as a recreation area but would include some wetlands.
8. South Street Wetland: 6.2 acres. City owned. The city is preparing for an EIR. It received a \$300,000 grant for a feasibility study in 2000, which is now complete. The area would be completely covered in wetlands and linked to the Chavez to Drake Greenbelt and Golden Shore Biological Reserve.
9. Los Corrales Wetlands: 231.3 acres. Privately owned. The Trust for Public Land was awarded \$1.1 million to help purchase some of the property. However, negotiations are ongoing. The area would be completely restored as a wetland.
10. Golden Shore Biological Reserve: 8.0 acres. City owned. The project is complete.
11. Colorado Lagoon: 28.4 acres. City owned. Received a \$200,000 grant in 2002 for a feasibility study. A \$500,000 grant was also secured for a diversion of storm drain line in sanitary sewer. The area would include wetlands.

SOURCE: City of Long Beach

PLEASE SEE PARKS / A12

PRESS-TELEGRAM

cont'd on back

CONTINUED FROM A1

resident would be more than a quarter-mile away from nature.

"What we're trying to accomplish is to give neighborhoods some elbow room," said Vice Mayor Frank Colonna.

That task, however, is not going to be so easy.

City officials say the recent meeting on wetlands bolstered support and set their plan in motion, giving them hope that Long Beach will be one of the nation's leaders in restoring much of its open space. But they also have the cumbersome task of securing federal and state money that could be used to purchase and restore several pieces of land.

Phil Hester, director of the Long Beach Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine, said the city has already requested \$35 million in bond money set aside by the state and federal governments for environmental projects.

Officials plan to seek an additional \$40 million in the near future, specifically setting their sights on Proposition 50, which targets wetlands.

Part of Long Beach officials would also probably help with funding — especially for the Los Cerritos Wetlands — since it is required to restore coastal habitat every time it destroys habitat through development.

Despite the state's budget woes and a nationally weak economy, Hester said the government funds — which total roughly \$10 billion — were approved by voters, and therefore can't be used for any other purpose than what the voters intended.

Sites targeted

He also said officials are on an aggressive campaign to obtain several pieces of land that could be used in the restoration project. Namely, they are targeting 48 acres in Wrigley Heights, about 16 acres at the Chavez (Park) to Drake (Park) Greenbelt and the 291-acre Los Cerritos Wetlands, which stretches into Orange County.

In addition, negotiators are attempting to secure several smaller blighted pieces of land that could be turned into open space near Central and West Long Beach — where the population is most concentrated.

"It would kind of be like a necklace of green," Hester said.

He also aims to protect some of the open areas that have been left behind.



This DeForest Wetlands area was what its name suggests, but the pools that once existed along the L.A. River just north of Del Amo Boulevard are no more. This area is one of those Long Beach and California officials hope to restore. Brittany Murray / Press-Telegram

areas between land and deep sea water, and are home to some of the most biodiverse populations in the world.

The Los Angeles River once created such a habitat, meandering from Venice to Long Beach, forming an enormous tidal marsh in San Pedro Bay. It carried nutrients and seeds to the flood plains, allowing plants and animals to thrive there.

But at the turn of the (20th) century, that all began to change, said Rich Ambrose, professor and director of environmental science and engineering at UCLA.

In the process of building railroads and Pacific Coast Highway, many of the wetlands were filled in so that workers didn't have to construct long bridges across the marshes. Severe flooding of the L.A. River in the late 1930s also prompted officials to channelize the river to keep it from meandering and destroying homes.

Scientists say the tragedy is that the organisms that depend on these ecosystems were endangered.

Crucial to survival

One-third of endangered plants and two-thirds of endangered animals depend on wetlands for their survival. In Southern California alone, 69 species of fish, such as halibut, white sea bass and squid, are found near shore. Many of them spend a portion of their life in the wetlands or feed on the fish that live there.

"We have been particularly hard hit," said Hartmann with the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project. "We have lost more of our wetlands than any other state and more than any

particles that trap them in the habitat's muddy floor. Organic elements, such as fertilizers, oil, gas and feces, are trapped in the wetlands, degraded by bacteria and released as gases into the air. Plants can absorb some of the pollutants. And tall grasses and reeds filter large pieces of trash from the water, which then would be removed by humans, Teal said.

It is unclear exactly how much pollution is too much. But Teal said wetlands can withstand great amounts. He once conducted a 25-year experiment in which he placed 10 times the amount of fertilizer on a wetland than would be put on a farm field. The wetland survived and fared extremely well.

Jerry Schubel, president and CEO of the Aquarium of the Pacific, sees the overall plan as an enormous opportunity that could be used as a worldwide model.

He also said the aquarium will play a role in the planning because the green space would be a great research and educational tool. The environments could be used to teach schoolchildren and others about nature and the organisms that live in it.

"The benefit will be enhancing the quality of human life in Long Beach so we can reconnect with nature," Schubel said.

snake down the L.A. River to Long Beach every year. That's not to mention the pollutants that can't be seen.

"If the wetlands are located where they can intercept runoff from urban areas ... they are good at cleaning up various kinds of pollution," said John Teal, a leading wetlands expert and senior scientist emeritus at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.

Heavy metals, such as mercury and lead, are bound to small

Group Could Be Wetlands' Last Chance

By Harry Saltzgaver
Executive Editor

In what may be a last-ditch effort to save \$7 million in state money to help buy the Los Cerritos Wetlands, the City Council approved pursuing a new Joint Powers Agreement on Tuesday night.

Partners in the agreement would include the city, the Lower Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, the state Coastal Conservancy and the city of Seal Beach. The motion was made by Third District Councilman Frank Colonna, who also is

the chair of the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy. Colonna has been attempting to save the wetlands since he was elected six years ago.

Much of the wetlands east of Pacific Coast Highway is degraded and home to
(Continued on Page 47A)

GRUNION GAZETTE

November 11, 2004

Page 47A

Wetlands

(Continued from Page 1A)

oil wells. The Coastal Conservancy had an option to buy more than 180 acres of the property from Bixby Ranch Company, but that option expired in 2002 without an agreement.

Earlier this year, Bixby Ranch officials ended talks with the conservancy and put the property up for sale. Negotiations fell apart after appraisals of the property value did not satisfy either side.

"This effort for a joint powers authority is at the request of the conservancy," Colonna said. "We want to create a bigger venue for the negotiations, so this is not solely a Long Beach issue."

"We expect the (state) Attorney General's office to be involved as well as the city attorney's office. This will take some time to put together, but there is \$7 million at stake, and ultimately, the fate of the wetlands."

In 2001, the state set aside \$7 million to help purchase the wetlands. But the Bixby Ranch portion alone was valued at anywhere from \$12 million to \$25 million — now up to \$35 million including oil rights.

The state grant is limited to use for property acquisition, remediation or wetland restoration. If it is not appropriated by June 2005, it may revert back to the state's general fund.

Negotiations even proceeded

to the point where a proposal went to the state Coastal Commission, consolidating all oil operations on an "island" in the middle of the wetlands and restoring the rest. But the state agency turned that proposal down, saying the oil operation was too much of an impact. A plan to keep oil operations going by slant drilling from off the wetlands property proved too expensive.

At one point, Bixby Ranch had prepared a development

plan for the property that included homes, retail space, office buildings and restoration of a portion of the wetlands. But the company ultimately decided to sell the property, including oil and mineral rights, because of the real estate market, according to Stewart Honeyman, chief operating officer for Bixby Ranch.

The joint powers authority would reach beyond the Bixby Ranch property, Colonna said. There are a group of smaller property owners within the Los

Cerritos Wetlands boundaries. The Hellman Ranch property, which crosses into Orange County and Seal Beach, also includes wetlands.

The action Tuesday gives City Manager Jerry Miller the power to negotiate an agreement with the various parties. No deadline was set.

9/20/05

PRESS-TELEGRAM

DRIAL

The Miami Herald

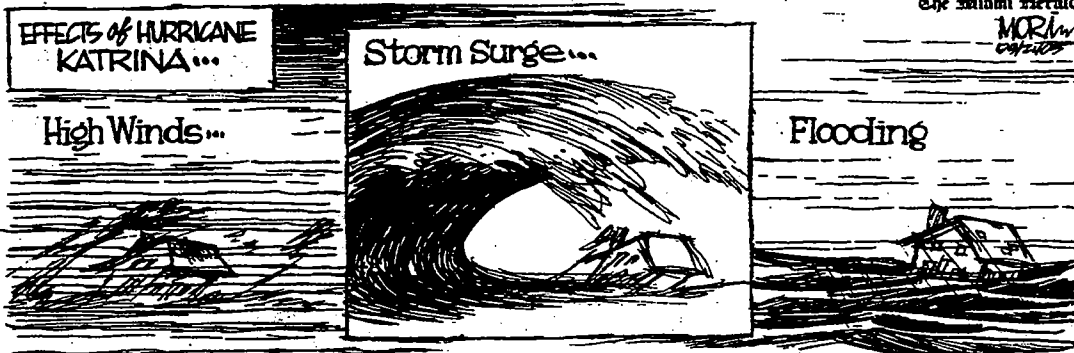
MORIN
©2005

EFFECTS OF HURRICANE
KATRINA...

Storm Surge...

High Winds...

Flooding



Politician Hindsight...



SEE, MAYBE
GLOBAL WARMING
IS A SERIOUS
PROBLEM!



SO THAT'S
WHAT
WETLANDS
ARE FOR!



GOLLY, MAYBE
WE SHOULDN'T
BUILD HOUSES
ANYWHERE
WE FEEL
LIKE!



WOW! RESPONSIBLE
ENVIRONMENTAL
PLANNING CAN ACTUALLY
SAVE TAXPAYERS
MONEY!!

Long Beach may annex county land

PT
10/20/97

Property: City seeking 182 acres in effort to extend Studebaker Road.

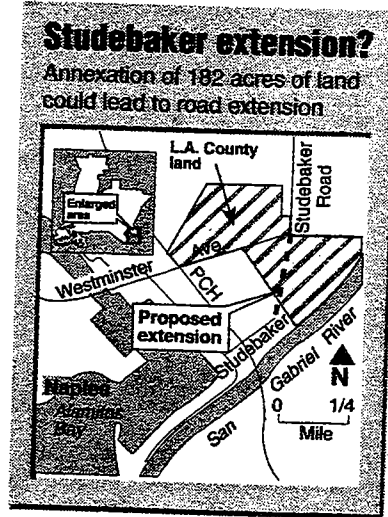
By Dorothy Korber
Staff writer

LONG BEACH - With an eye toward extending Studebaker Road south to Pacific Coast Highway, Long Beach is moving steadily toward annexing 182 acres of county land - including the last remnants of the Los Cerritos Wetlands.

The bow-shaped parcel, bisected by Westminster Avenue, consists of marshland and oil fields privately owned by the Bixby Ranch Co. and Bryant Trust.

"The owners want to get out of the oil business," said Councilman Doug Drummond, whose 3rd District would absorb the annexation. "They've agreed to bring Studebaker on through, which will alleviate the congestion at Second Street and Pacific Coast Highway. "This has been an important goal of mine for years."

Studebaker Road - with easy access to two freeways - now



Press-Telegram

dead-ends at Westminster Avenue. That's the way environmentalists like it.

"There's no question at all," said Ann Cantrell of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Task Force. "It (the Studebaker extension) goes right through the Bryant area that is wetlands."

A 1983 land use plan for the

PLEASE SEE LAND / B2

LAND: Parcel sought for road project

CONTINUED FROM B1

area permits residential and commercial development, providing that 96 acres of wetlands are restored. Cantrell and other critics of the plan say its environmental impact report, now 20 years old, is outdated and must be redone.

The property, part of Los Angeles County since 1850, is the last large unincorporated parcel bor-

dering Long Beach. The city began the annexation process a year ago.

The latest step in that process took place Tuesday, when the Long Beach City Council approved a property tax exchange with Los Angeles County. County supervisors are expected to approve their end of the tax agreement within 60 days.

After that, the annexation proposal goes to the Local Agency

Formation Commission for a hearing. The commission could kill the annexation - or approve it, with or without conditions.

If approved, the city of Long Beach will next be required to hold its own hearing, taking into account any written or oral protests.

Barring a protracted court battle over wetlands preservation, officials expect the matter to be resolved by mid-1998.

Questions about the Los Cerritos Wetlands

congratulations to the Press-Telegram for the excellent story about the Los Cerritos Wetlands (Page 1, Jan. 23). Much is to be commended for his thorough research and balanced reporting. The photos and photos were well done and added standing for those not familiar with this

are a few issues which I feel need attention. It was stated there are 66 oil on the Bixby property. Of these, how are currently producing oil? It is my understanding that most of the oil has been pumped from this area, which is why there are no slant-drilling under areas surrounding the wetlands. Also, I have been told his oil has a lot of hydrogen sulfide, causes pollution and decreases its value. a California Coastal Commission suggests sites which might be studied as alternate for the oil operations. Bixby refused to consider these sites, insisting that five in the middle of the restored wetlands continue to be used for oil extraction. It be that this area is so contaminated he costs for cleanup are prohibitive? nothing not made clear in the article is that Bixby is required by law to clean up pollution in this area before any build-restoration can be done. The first step be to take core samples to determine contaminants are present. To use this as a wetland will require much less removal than building homes. art Honeyman, vice president of Bixby Company, is quoted as saying, "I would

love to build there (on the wetlands) ... If they would give me the permits, I'd start building tomorrow." Why can't he get those permits? Thank goodness there are people who realize that 95 percent of the wetlands in the Southern California area have already been drained, paved over or turned into marinas. Housing or retail development do not belong next to a functioning wetland. To mention just a few problems, oil and anti-freeze from cars, pesticides and fertilizers from yards, vehicle traffic, even domestic animals such as dogs and cats are harmful to the animals who live here.

It is the goal of the Los Cerritos Task Force to obtain the money to buy and restore all of the available former estuary of the San Gabriel River, including the Bryant and Hellman properties, and make this all a part of the existing Seal Beach Wildlife Refuge. We have applied for Land and Water Conservation Funds, which is money paid to the federal government by oil companies to be able to drill in coastal waters. If Proposition 12 passes in March, this would be another possible source of money.



Ducks waddle past a group of Great Blue Herons wading through the deal to sell the property to a state conservancy fell through

I was encouraged to read that Honeyman would rather sell this land than to build houses and strip malls on it. Although his reasons are not environmental, but monetary, it gives me hope that there may be a way to resolve this

waters of Los Cerritos Wetlands
last year.
conflict. Perhaps my grandchildren will be able to see this area restored as the wetlands I remember growing up 60 years ago.

Ann Capra
El Dorado Archibon
Los Cerritos Task Force

1/30/99

A mandate to protect our wetlands

By Don May

In 1972, when Californians overwhelmingly approved the Coastal Protection Act, they very assuredly were fretting about the loss of coastal wetlands. As a member of the executive committee that drafted, qualified and managed the successful Proposition 20 campaign, I was, and we are, acutely aware of the deep public support for the protection and restoration of our few remaining wetlands. That's why the current Coastal Commission remains to this day so committed to wetlands — and enforcing the laws that protect them. Contrary to your editorial (Dec. 12), we don't think that's silly.

The Los Cerritos Wetlands Task Force is a community-based organization that is seeking to acquire, remediate and restore what's left of the San Gabriel River Estuary. With just 40 pristine acres left of the former 2,400-acre tidal marsh, we think that's urgent. The Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project, an inter-agency task force of all state and federal resource agencies, thinks so, too. What the Press-Telegram calls a "weedy eyesore" is their No. 1 priority restoration project in all Southern California.

A larger concern is the Press-Telegram support for the folks at Bixby in their defiance of laws which protect wetlands. In the name of weed abatement, they tow-mowed out and filled critical habitat for endangered species and migratory birds, telling the Press-Telegram that they intend to ignore complaints by the state and federal agencies. The Press-Telegram says Bixby is "flabbergasted that the Coastal Commission, which, in the absence of an approved local coastal plan, is the local agency responsible for determining appropriate land usage, could possibly object to a commercial venture on a designated wetland where the only approved land use is for oil drilling.

In the world of allowable land uses, there is no difference between Pa's Punkin Patch and a strip mall; between a tree lot and a high-rise commercial venture. In condoning Bixby's reported intent to ignore attempts by the agencies to enforce the law, the Press-Telegram implies they are above the law, and impugns "environmentalists who mutter darkly that a Christmas tree lot can't exist there at all, because this is a protected wetlands area." It seems to us that this opinion "has pointed up a more basic disconnect between the (Coastal) commission and the average Californian" and the Press-Telegram over respect for law and order and due process.

The Press-Telegram goes on to opine, "Some ... of the usual gaggle of local environmentalists ... even object to the standard-issue lighting that rings the Christmas tree lot, apparently because it might disturb migratory birds,"

could possibly have said that. Neither do we, but we do feel that responsible journalists, even in an opinion, should have some source for a statement of fact. The inflammatory language and baseless assertions in this absurd flap over Pa's Punkin Patch appear to us to be an orchestrated diversion from the real issue: the systematic defiance of the law by the Bixby Ranch Company through their abuse, by filling and habitat destruction, of the wetlands under their control.

But this kind of controversy is largely beside the point. Wetlands really are "the bejeweled wilderness" that the resource agencies are charged to preserve. This is why we are struggling to protect them:

They are crucial in the biology of California coast: nurseries for aquatic wildlife, a central resource for California's struggling commercial and sport fishing industries decimated by wetland destruction, source of the gene pool necessary to rebuild and maintain former coastal natural areas and a critical resource for our schools and universities.

They are a living monument to our rich historic natural heritage. They provide essential stepping stones for migratory bird species, many currently endangered, all at risk if necessary food and rest stops allowing them to cross our cities are filled to build more strip malls.

They are potential solutions to Long Beach's chronic problems with polluted runoff because they act as natural filters and pollutant traps. Indeed, many communities have rebuilt wetlands as urban storm water filters.

They are a reservoir of genetic wealth — incredibly rich in biological diversity that our planet is losing at an alarming rate. The life-saving medication you need may only be found in the tissue of some critter from our wetland. The information necessary to survive all geologic disasters ever visited upon this area is encoded in the genes of the survivors now living here. We should not discard them.

They are a source of recreation and aesthetic value, even tourist revenues, as many communities that protect and restore them have found. Local festivals for birdwatchers draw thousands from across the country. They are the difference between a land-sea boundary of green life and one of cement and asphalt.

That's why the Los Cerritos Wetlands are a top-priority restoration target for federal and state agencies and the coastal conservancy. This priority is reflected in the administration's upcoming budget, which includes \$10 million for their acquisition and restoration.

The Press-Telegram has historically been reasonably even-handed in its treatment of environmental issues and I can only assume that this outburst was an oversight, the result of misinformation and inattention. The community of Long Beach deserves better from our own newspaper and I am hopeful enough to believe that we will not see this again.

Don May is president of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Task Force.