



Memo

To: Honorable Mayor Bob Foster & Members of the City Council

From: Jerry R. Schubel, President, Aquarium of the Pacific

Subject: Los Cerritos Wetlands Agenda Item #28

Date: 18 May 2010

I am hoping to be at the Council meeting this evening, for the discussion of item #28, but may be late. I am teaching a life-long learning course this spring called "Stumbling Toward Sustainability" in our Aquatic Academy. In the event that I am unable to get there in time, I have requested that Council Member Gary DeLong read this statement into the record. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerry R. Schubel".

Jerry R. Schubel
President and CEO



City Council

18 May 2010

Los Cerritos Statement

I'm Jerry Schubel, President of the Aquarium of the Pacific, and resident of Long Beach for the past 8 years. I am past chair of the National Research Council's Marine board and the Ocean Research and Resources Advisory Council. At present, I am on NOAA's Science Advisory Board and the California Ocean Trust's Science Advisory Team.

Long Beach is a wonderful city; one full of accomplishment and even greater promise.

I want to speak in support of the City's plan to acquire a segment of the Los Cerritos Wetlands. Southern California has lost 95% of its wetlands. Historically, most of the Long Beach coast was a wetland. A century ago Los Cerritos Wetlands stretched over 2,400 acres along the meandering San Gabriel River.

Wetlands are among the most productive ecosystems in the world, comparable to rain forests and coral reefs. Our remaining wetland ecosystems serve as both nurseries and supermarkets, creating habitat for species critical to our watershed and coastal ocean. Wetlands improve water quality by removing sediment and contaminants; reduce flood and storm discharges; buffer shorelines against erosion; and provide recreational and aesthetic enjoyment for humans. They have been characterized as nature's hardest working environments.

Today the remaining 375 acres of the original Los Cerritos complex are surrounded by development—stores, motels, power plants, streets and highways—but they remain a place where people and nature co-exist in interesting and important ways in this urban wetland.

It is the multiple uses by humans and by other living things that make Los Cerritos so special and so important to Long Beach.

Long Beach is at the heart of the Southern California urban ocean, one of the most distinctive segments of the world ocean. The end of this month the Aquarium of the Pacific will launch a new program entitled "Southern California's Urban Ocean" to celebrate the diversity of uses humans make of the ocean and the multiplicity of ways we benefit from the ocean.

We humans will benefit most by acquiring Los Cerritos wetlands and protecting them for future generations. The addition of other components of the Los Cerritos complex make the argument for acquisition even more compelling. It is our last unprotected wetland.

We encourage you to support this agenda item.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerry R. Schubel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "J" and "S".

Jerry R. Schubel
President and CEO