

**PUENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY  
CITIZENS TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
*Endowment Provided by the Puente Hills Landfill***

**September 19, 2023, Tuesday, 7 p.m.**

**LOCATION:**

**Palm Park: 5703 Palm Avenue, Whittier, CA 90601.**

|                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Catherine Houwen        | La Habra Heights      |
| Adam Nazaroff           | La Habra Heights      |
| Roy Francis             | La Habra Heights      |
| Shelley Romanoff-Andros | Whittier              |
| Janis Cavanaugh         | Whittier              |
| Michelle Pekko-Seymoure | Whittier              |
| Matthew Liang, Chair    | County of Los Angeles |
| John Ford               | County of Los Angeles |
| Bryan Coreas            | County of Los Angeles |

**Members of the public may provide electronic comments by Monday, September 18, 2023, by 4:00 p.m. to [info@habitatauthority.org](mailto:info@habitatauthority.org) Please label the email in the subject heading as “Public Comments.” Public comments may also be verbally heard during item III of the meeting.**

72 hours prior to Citizens Technical Advisory Committee meetings, the entire Citizens Technical Advisory Committee agenda package is available for review, along with any meeting-related writings or documents provided to a majority of the Committee members after distribution of the agenda package, at the Authority’s website, [www.habitatauthority.org](http://www.habitatauthority.org). In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, if you require a disability related modification or accommodation to participate in this meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please call Andrea Gullo at 562.945.9003, at least 48 hours prior to meeting.

Pursuant to Section 54954 of the Government Code, the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (Authority) will hold a special meeting of the Citizens Technical Advisory Committee (CTAC) at the above time and location for the purpose of:

Oaths of Office for new Advisory Committee members Dr. Cavanaugh, Mr. Francis, Mr. Ford and Ms. Romanoff-Andros.

**AGENDA**

- I. Call to order.
- II. Roll call.
- III. Introduction of new Advisory Committee members.
- IV. Public comments.
- V. Discussion and possible action regarding election of Committee Vice Chair.

- VI. Approval of Minutes for the May 23, 2023, Special Meeting.
- VII. Standing Reports:
  - a) Report by Board Liaison on previous months' Authority Board of Directors meetings.
  - b) Committee Member feedback from the public as it relates to the Authority.
- VIII. Presentation of Authority and ranger activities from the fiscal year 2022-23 in review.
- IX. Discussion: Receive and file April, May, June, July and August 2023 Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) Ranger Reports.
- X. Update regarding the pilot program for providing dog poop bags at Arroyo Pescadero Trailhead.
- XI. Discussion regarding potential in-lieu fee mitigation restoration project of 12 acres of habitat on the Authority's properties.
- XII. Receive and file information about Authority volunteers recognized for their contributions: Pam Hill, Tom Merlino, and Lee Willard.
- XIII. Closing Remarks (Comments/questions from Committee Members and/or Executive Director).
- XIV. Adjournment and announcement of the next meeting.

The Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority is a public entity established pursuant to the Joint Exercise of Powers Act by agreement between the City of Whittier, Los Angeles County, and Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Regular meetings of the Citizens Technical Advisory Committee are scheduled for the Tuesday before the third Thursday of every month. Questions about any agenda item can be addressed to Andrea Gullo, Executive Director, 562.945.9003.

MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: September 19, 2023

To: Citizens Technical Advisory Committee

Prepared by: Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

**Agenda Item V. Discussion and possible action regarding election of Committee Vice Chair.**

Background:

On February 28, 2013, at the Advisory Committee's recommendation, the Board of Directors approved the attached Advisory Committee election policies. The Chair and Vice Chair positions are rotational and elections to the positions occur annually during the first month of the calendar year. This year an Advisory Committee Member from the County of Los Angeles was scheduled to fill the Chair position, and a member representing the City of Whittier was scheduled to fill the Vice Chair position. Please see the attached rotation schedule of officers.

The Committee last held elections in February 2023. Since then, the elected Vice Chair resigned from the Advisory Committee. According to section 3 of the Advisory Committee's election policies, if a vacancy occurs with the positions, the Committee shall vote at the next meeting to fill that position with a member from which community the position was held. A representative from Whittier is slated to fill this position in accordance with the rotation schedule of officers.

Also, the election of officers is the most opportune time for the Advisory Committee to identify a Board Liaison for the group. This position has historically been filled either by the Advisory Committee Chair, or by the member designated by the Committee to present actions and thoughts of the Committee at the Board of Directors' meetings. In February 2023, the Committee elected Cathy Houwen of La Habra Heights for this position. No action is needed on this matter until 2024.

Recommendation:

That a member nominate a Vice Chair representing the Whittier community, and have this motion seconded by another for a vote.

Attachments:

Election policies

Rotational schedule of officers



# **Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority**

Endowment Provided by the Puente Hills Landfill

## **Citizens Technical Advisory Committee Election of Officers Policy**

1. The CTAC's chair and vice-chair positions (the positions) shall have a standard term limit of one year. Members may be elected to hold these positions in the future but not in consecutive calendar years, except as described in section 3 below.
2. The positions shall rotate by communities represented on the CTAC. Starting in the year 2013 a CTAC member representing La Habra Heights shall be elected to hold the chair position, following the year afterwards by a member from the unincorporated communities of Los Angeles County (either Hacienda Heights or Rowland Heights), and followed by a member from the City of Whittier. Starting in 2013, the vice-chair position shall be a member from the unincorporated communities of Los Angeles County, followed the next year by a member from the City of Whittier, and then by a member from La Habra Heights.
3. If a vacancy occurs with the positions, the CTAC shall vote at the next meeting to fill that position with a member from which community the position was held. In the event that a community member representing that of the current position is unavailable to be elected to fill the vacancy, then the succeeding community in the rotation will be eligible for election into that vacant position, as well as be eligible for re-election at the next first meeting of the calendar year. The objective is to not have any position held by the same community for two consecutive years, but not be shorter than one year in length. Should the chair position change representative communities then the vice-chair position shall rotate community representatives as well.
4. Should no member decide to make themselves available for election, the current officer shall continue to hold that position until a replacement officer is elected even if the officer's term expires.
5. The CTAC is eligible to elect any member to the positions out of rotation order if it acts by a majority in the belief that the interests of the Authority will be best served in that manner.

The above policy is compatible with Authority Board Resolution 97-01 that established the CTAC. Section 2f of the Resolution authorizes annual elections of officers, the positions, to occur in the first meeting of the calendar year. Specifically, the proposed term limits and rotation schedule of the positions are not in conflict with the Resolution as each year the election



of officers would be limited to a candidate pool of up to three members representing the community that is eligible to hold the positions according to the rotation schedule. The Resolution allows for a re-election of officers, which would be the case should a member be re-elected to a position in a non-consecutive year of holding that position, or in the special case of a member who has filled a vacant position the previous year.

For example, if La Habra Heights' representative as chair is no longer available in May to hold the position, then at the June CTAC meeting a vote shall occur to elect a different La Habra Heights representative to that position. If no other La Habra Heights member is available to fill that position, then a CTAC member from unincorporated Los Angeles County shall be elected to the position of chair. With this being the case, the vice-chair position will need to rotate to the next representative community, the City of Whittier. In January of the next year, the County CTAC chair member will be eligible for re-election to the chair position, or another member from the County will be eligible for election to the chair position. The same logic applies for the vice-chair position.

Advisory Committee Chair and Vice Chair Rotation Schedule

Notes

| Year | Chair Region | Held By        | Vice Chair Region | Held By       |
|------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| 2013 | LHH          | Cathy Houwen   | LA County         | Gina Natoli   |
| 2014 | LA County    | Gina Natoli    | Whittier          | April Garbat  |
| 2015 | Whittier     | April Garbat   | LHH               | Cathy Houwen  |
| 2016 | LHH          | Cathy Houwen   | LA County         | Richard Lacy  |
| 2017 | LA County    |                | Whittier          |               |
| 2017 | Whittier     | Shelley Andros | LHH               | Cathy Houwen  |
| 2018 | Whittier     | Shelley Andros | LHH               | Cathy Houwen  |
| 2019 | LHH          | Cathy Houwen   | LA County         | Karen Chang   |
| 2020 | LA County    | Karen Chang    | Whittier          | Ray Wong      |
| 2021 | Whittier     | Chuck Lawrence | LHH               | Roy Francis   |
| 2022 | LHH          | Roy Francis    | LA County         | Matthew Liang |
| 2023 | LA County    | Matthew Liang  | Whittier          | vacant        |
| 2024 | Whittier     |                | LHH               |               |
| 2025 | LHH          |                | LA County         |               |
| 2026 | LA County    |                | Whittier          |               |
| 2027 | Whittier     |                | LHH               |               |

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Notes:

- 1 No meeting: Feb, March or April
- 2 May meeting elections, no County representative on CTAC
- 3 Elections held in October 2022

DRAFT Minutes  
PUENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY  
CITIZENS TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
May 23, 2023

The special meeting of the Citizens Technical Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, May 23, 2023, at Palm Park, 5703 Palm Ave, Whittier, CA 90601.

**I. CALL TO ORDER.**

Chair, Matthew Liang, called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

**II. ROLL CALL.**

A roll call was taken, and there was a quorum at this time.

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| <b>Members Present:</b> Matthew Liang, Chair | County of Los Angeles |
| Catherine Houwen                             | La Habra Heights      |
| Adam Nazaraoff                               | La Habra Heights      |
| Bryan Coreas                                 | County of Los Angeles |
| Jeff Brauckman, Vice Chair                   | Whittier              |

|                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Members Absent:</b> |                       |
| Gabriel Monares        | County of Los Angeles |
| (vacant)               | Whittier              |
| (vacant)               | Whittier              |
| (vacant)               | La Habra Heights      |

**Authority Representatives Present:**  
Andrea Gullo, Executive Director  
Michelle Mariscal, Ecologist  
Marlyn Barajas, Program Analyst

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS.**

Steve Huber, Vice President of Whittier Area Audubon, provided a brief introduction and an update regarding the group's monthly Saturday hikes in Sycamore Canyon.

In April, Mick Kamburowski submitted a public comment via email requesting that the Committee strongly consider extending the hours of the Hellman Trail to 7:00 a.m. to allow people who work at 9:00 a.m. to enjoy the trail.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE MARCH 21, 2023, SPECIAL MEETING.**

Member Houwen motioned to approve these minutes as drafted and Member Coreas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**V. STANDING REPORTS:**

**a. REPORT BY BOARD LIAISON ON PREVIOUS MONTHS' AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING.**

Member Houwen provided a report for March and April's meetings.

**b. COMMITTEE MEMBER FEEDBACK FROM THE PUBLIC AS IT RELATES TO THE HABITAT AUTHORITY.**

Chair Liang attended the Habitat Authority's Open House, and stated the event went well and was informative.

**VI. DISCUSSION: RECEIVE AND FILE FEBRUARY AND MARCH 2023 MOUNTAINS RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY (MRCA) RANGER REPORTS.**

Executive Director Gullo provided a report and highlighted the various work done by the rangers daily.

**VII. REVIEW BY AUTHORITY STAFF AND DISCUSSION REGARDING COMMUNITY OPINION SURVEY RESULTS ADMINISTERED BY AUTHORITY CONSULTANT FAIRBANK, MASLIN, MAULIN, METZ & ASSOCIATES.**

Executive Director Gullo provided a report. There was discussion.

**VIII. REVIEW, DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION TO AUTHORITY BOARD REGARDING AUTHORITY WORKPLAN FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023, AND AUTHORITY WORKPLAN FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023-24, AND REVIEW OF STRATEGIC GUIDELINES.**

Executive Director Gullo provided a report. There was discussion.

Member Nazaroff motioned to recommend to the Board that they approve Authority's Workplan for fiscal year 2022-2023 and fiscal year 2023-24. Member Brauckman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.



**IX. REVIEW, DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION TO AUTHORITY BOARD REGARDING AUTHORITY ANNUAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023-24, AND REVIEW CORRESPONDING BUDGETS.**

Executive Director Gullo provided a report. There was discussion.

Member Coreas motioned to recommend to the Board to approve the Authority's annual budget for fiscal year 2023-24 and Member Nazaroff seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**X. RECEIVE AND FILE UPDATE ON THE COMPLETED HARBOR BOULEVARD COASTAL SAGE SCRUB MITIGATION SITE.**

Ecologist Mariscal provided a report.

**XI. CLOSING REMARKS (COMMENTS/QUESTIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND/OR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.**

Member Coreas thanked the Habitat Authority and the audience.

Executive Director Gullo announced that former CTAC member, Roy Francis, has been approved to rejoin CTAC.

Executive Director Gullo mentioned the City of Whittier is looking at CTAC applications.

Ecologist Mariscal stated she gave a presentation to It's Garden Thyme Garden Club.

Executive Director Gullo stated she and Ecologist Mariscal gave a presentation to Whittier Area Audubon.

Member Houwen announced that she will present an update on the Habitat Authority to La Habra Heights Council on June 12th.

**XII. ADJOURNMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NEXT MEETING.**

There being no further comments, or business to be discussed, Chair Liang Adjourned the meeting at 9:02 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is expected to be canceled, and the next meeting is expected to be held on July 18, 2023.



June 30 , 2023

**Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority  
Ranger Services Activities for April, May and June 2023**

- Continued general patrol for: providing visitor information, identifying hazardous conditions and correcting illegal activity.
- Continued general maintenance for: graffiti removal, vandalism repair, litter and dumping removal, fence and gate repairs, sign installations and repairs and trail maintenance.
- Attended the Habitat Authority Board meetings.
- Planning and preparation for 4th of July. Communicated and met with Habitat Authority volunteers, Whittier CERT Team, Grande Vista homeowners, Whittier Public Works, L.A. Co. Sheriffs, Whittier Police, L. A Co. Fire, and Lahabra Heights Fire.
- Communicated with Habitat Authority volunteer trail watchers about trail conditions and hazards. Discussed 4<sup>th</sup> of July deployment.
- Participated in our ranger monthly management meeting.
- Attended annual Wildland Firefighting refresher training. Installed water pumps and firefighting apparatus in the trucks.
- Participated in the recording of a video about the daily duties of a ranger for Habitat Authority social media.
- Participated in the Habitat Authority Open House presentation.
- Picked up dumping including:
  - Trash on Colima Road.
  - Debris on Fullerton Road.
  - Mattress at Powder Canyon.
- Continue to notify the Habitat Authority staff of all unsuccessful animal road crossings that are observed at or near Habitat Authority property. During the months of April, May and June no animals were observed.
- Continue to monitor the Harbor underpass. No activity to report.

- Continue to pick up dog defecation at all the trailheads. Researched doggy bag holders to install at the trailheads. Installed additional dog on leash and pick up after signs at Arroyo Pescadero.
- Installed “No E-Bikes” signs at all the trailheads.
- Continue to monitor and inspect the fuel modification contractors and communicate with local fire departments and residents.
- Met with Habitat Authority and L.A. County Fire Battalion Chiefs regarding roads throughout the Preserve.
- Inspected property adjacent to Habitat Authority property for encroachment and new construction plans.
- Cleared several trails/roads with tractor/mower including;
  - Sycamore Canyon
  - Bob Henderson Loop
  - Deer Loop
  - Arroyo San Miguel
  - Gray Squirrel
  - Powder Canyon
  - Black Walnut
  - Service road to Whittier Landfill
- Continue to check on the goat operations at Turnbull Canyon and Powder Canyon.
- Inspected the roads and trails for downed trees and trail damage after the rain. Cleared several fallen branches along the trails.
- Repaired the fire gate at the Elderberry entrance and created a pedestrian access.
- Large eucalyptus tree fell in the fuel mod zone. Contacted North East Trees Contractor for the removal.
- Recovered an abandoned bicycle at the Hacienda Hills Trailhead. The bike was later returned to the owner. Recovered an abandoned bicycle on the Arroyo San Miguel Trail.
- Removed a dead tree along Catalina Ave.
- Repaired the back-flow device at Powder Canyon.
- Repaired the fence at the Hacienda Hills Trailhead.

- Turnbull Canyon Road was closed for several weeks due to a sink hole. Continue to update Habitat Authority on the progress.
- Continue to patrol the SCE, Brea 57 site and Monterey mitigation sites in Powder Canyon and the Olinda site in Arroyo San Miguel.
- Recovered a stolen vehicle that was left abandoned on Turnbull Canyon Road at the Elderberry Trail entrance.
- Dealt with various violations including:
  - In the Preserve after hours at Sycamore Canyon, Hacienda Hills, Powder Cyn., Hellman Park and Arroyo Pescadero.
  - Parking violations at Powder Canyon, Arroyo Pescadero, Hacienda Hills Trailhead, Sycamore Canyon and Ford property.
  - Dogs in Sycamore Canyon
  - Hikers in Turnbull Canyon and Powder Canyon after rain.
  - Loud music in the Hacienda Hills.
  - Warn and advise electric bikes in Powder Canyon and Hacienda Hills.
  - Subject cutting cactus at Ford property.
  - Dogs off leash at Powder Cyn, Ford property and Arroyo Pescadero.
  - Bikes in Arroyo Pescadero, Sycamore Cyn and Hellman Park.
- The Preserve was closed several days due to rain.
- Responded to a fire at Hellman Park. L. A County Fire extinguished the fire quickly. Small fire under the large pepper tree. Caused by homeless.
- Assisted Whittier Police with a transient that jumped the fence in Worsham Canyon. Whittier PD transported the subject for mental evaluation.
- Due to safety concerns and overcrowding at the Turnbull Canyon entrance, we previously worked with the owner of the property and Whittier Police Department to secure the vacant lot that is next to the entrance. We secured the lot several times. We recovered a stolen vehicle abandoned on the lot.
- Continue monitoring the surveillance cameras at various trailheads in attempt to catch the vehicle break-in perpetrators. We are also coordinating with Whittier Police and L.A. County Sheriff. We continue to get positive information of the suspects from the cameras.
- Continue to contact the Los Angeles County Department of Street Maintenance regarding the graffiti along Turnbull Canyon Road.
- Continue to conduct perimeter patrols of all property for fence damage, illegal access points, rope swings, and encroachments.

- Received several calls during the months of April, May and June to our 24-hour ranger emergency services number including:
  - Several calls for hikers locked in at Hellman Park.
  - Several inquiries if the Preserve is open.
  - Hikers locked in at Orange Grove Ave.
  - Hikers locked in at Sycamore Canyon.
  - Hikers locked in at the Hacienda Hills Trailhead.
  - Reporting a mountain lion sighting on Vale Drive.
  - Reporting trees blocking the Ahwingna Trail.
  - Reporting lost wallet in Sycamore Canyon.
  - Vehicle break in at Sycamore Canyon.
  - Reporting an injured squirrel. Inquiring what to do with it.
  - Possible injured person at Powder Canyon. Called back to disregard.
  - Interested in the goats program.
  - Found a shirt with blood on it at Sycamore Canyon.
  - Saw a large cat in La habra Heights.
  - Reporting an illegally parked car at the Hacienda Hills Trailhead.
  - Reporting a homeless person on Milton Street.
  - Reporting the trail is overgrown at Hellman Park.
  - Reporting a fire at Hellman Park.
  - Bees along the trail at Sycamore Canyon.
  - Reporting fence damage at the Hacienda Hills Trailhead.
  - Smoking in Powder Canyon.
  - A peacock in the street at Pathfinder/Harbor Blvd.
  - Lost hiker at Arroyo Pescadero. Hiker made it back to their car.
  - Reporting an injured duck in her yard.
  - Reporting large trucks possibly dumping.
  - Campus Police looking for student from Orange Grove Middle School that left school walking towards the hills.
  - Reporting a sign missing at Worsham Canyon.
  - Question regarding brush clearance in Whittier.
  - Lost keys on Skyline Drive.
  - Reporting hikers in the Hacienda Hills before 9am.
  - Reporting someone looking into vehicles at Arroyo Pescadero.
  - Reporting an open camp fire at Murphy Ranch Park.
  - Reporting a bobcat at Hellman Park.
  - Reporting someone setting up a religious and food booth at the Hacienda Hills Trailhead.
  - Sprained ankle and need help getting back to the car at the Hacienda Hills Trailhead.
  - Inquiring about when weed clearance will be done at Old Ranch Rd.
  - Whittier Audubon cannot open the locks at Sycamore Canyon.
  - Reporting a homeless in Worsham Canyon.
  - Reporting dog poop on the Ahwingna Trail.
  - Resident found a baby coyote. Needed to know what to do with it.
  - Inquiring if dogs are allowed in Arroyo Pescadero.
  - Reporting the gates are open for vehicles at Hellman Park.
  - Cars locked in at Hellman Park.

- Continue to check and re-post trail closure signs and rope-fence at unauthorized trails and restoration areas in Turnbull Canyon, Worsham Canyon, Powder Canyon and Hellman Park.
- Continue to work closely with Executive Director Andrea Gullo on various projects and assignments as requested.

If you have any questions, or would like any additional information, please feel free to contact me anytime. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*K E Hughes*

Kenn Hughes  
Deputy Chief Ranger



**MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**  
Franklin Canyon Park  
2600 Franklin Canyon Drive  
Beverly Hills, California 90210  
Phone (310) 858-7272 Fax (310) 858-7212

August 31, 2023

**Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority  
Ranger Services Activities for July and August 2023**

- Continued general patrol for: providing visitor information, identifying hazardous conditions and correcting illegal activity.
- Continued general maintenance for: graffiti removal, vandalism repair, litter and dumping removal, fence and gate repairs, sign installations and repairs and trail maintenance.
- Provided extra patrol for July 4<sup>th</sup>. Coordinated with Habitat Authority staff, Whittier Police, L.A. County Sheriff, L.A., County Fire, Whittier CERT Team and Grande Vista residents. Met with La Habra Heights Fire and La Habra Heights Fire Watch. Posted several Habitat Authority volunteers at critical locations to prevent entry to the preserve and watch for illegal fireworks.
- Responded to a fire on Turnbull Canyon. Rangers kept the Habitat Authority staff updated. Prepared to evacuate the goats. L.A. County Fire extinguished the fire quickly. Approximately one acre.
- Participated in the Hacienda Heights annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade. Citizens Technical Advisory Committee Chair Matthew Liang rode with the ranger.
- Responded to a fire on Turnbull Canyon/Los Lomitas. Not on Habitat Authority property. Made contact with L.A. County Fire incident command. Notified Habitat Authority.
- Ranger vehicles were fitted with new updated water tanks and fire apparatus prior to July 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Attended the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (Habitat Authority) Board meeting.
- Received the long awaited tractor/mower from the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy Grant.
- Participated in the Habitat Authority monthly management meeting.

- Participated in our ranger monthly management meeting.
- Attended Habitat Authority volunteer meeting.
- Working with Habitat Authority to schedule Jr Ranger programs.
- Monitoring all fuel modification efforts in Whittier, La Habra Heights and Hacienda Heights. Working with City and County officials, contractors and Habitat Authority staff. All clearance was completed.
- Continue to notify the Habitat Authority staff of all unsuccessful animal road crossings that are observed at or near Habitat Authority property. During the months of July and August no animals were observed.
- Continue to conduct perimeter patrols of all property for fence damage, illegal access points, rope swings, and encroachments.
- Provided early morning patrol at Hacienda Heights for early hikers prior to opening.
- Inspected property adjacent to Habitat Authority property for encroachment and new construction plans.
- Continue to monitor the Harbor underpass with no illegal activity to report.
- Continue to check on the goat operations at Turnbull Canyon and Powder Canyon.
- Continue to pick up dog defecation at all the trailheads. Installed a doggy bag holder at Arroyo Pescadero Trailhead. Habitat Authority volunteers monitored the dog defecation before the bag installation and continued to monitor after the bag installation to determine the effectiveness.
- Removed tree branches that fell into neighbors yard in Hacienda Heights.
- Removed branches in the road at Orange Drive in Whittier.
- Contracted the removal of a large tree that fell on a gazebo in a neighbor's yard in Hacienda Heights.
- Removed large fallen branches blocking the Ahwingna ADA Trail in Hacienda Heights.
- Removed large fallen eucalyptus branch from the Bob Henderson Loop Trail.



- Removed large tree blocking the Powder Cyn Trail. Worked with Habitat Authority staff to schedule contractor to remove large fallen tree blocking the Grey Squirrel Trail.
- Repaired sign at Powder Canyon.
- Contacted a neighbor in Hacienda Heights that her domestic rabbits are digging under her fence and entering the Preserve.
- Continue to patrol the SCE, Brea 57 site and Monterey mitigation sites in Powder Canyon and the Olinda site in Arroyo San Miguel.
- The Preserve was closed for two days due to Hurricane Hilary.
- Due to safety concerns and overcrowding at the Turnbull Canyon entrance this summer we worked with the owner of the property and Whittier Police Dept. to secure the vacant lot that is next to the entrance. We had to re-secure the chain twice in July.
- Repaired the fire gate at the Elderberry entrance again in July due to vandalism.
- Contact with a homeless at Arroyo Pescadero. Called L.A County Fire. Subject was cited for an existing warrant and transported to the hospital for a leg injury.
- Continue monitoring the surveillance cameras at various trailheads in attempt to catch the vehicle break-in perpetrators. We are also coordinating with Whittier Police and L.A. County Sheriff.
- Continue to contact the Los Angles County Department of Street Maintenance regarding the graffiti along Turnbull Canyon Road.
- Picked up dumping including:
  - A safe at the Ford property.
  - Debris at Arroyo San Miguel.
  - Debris on Fullerton Road.
- Continue to check and re-post trail closure signs and rope-fence at unauthorized trails and restoration areas in Turnbull Canyon, Worsham Canyon, Powder Canyon and Hellman Park.
- Received several service calls during the months of July and August to our 24-hour ranger emergency services number including:
  - Several calls for hikers locked in Hellman Park.
  - Several calls inquiring about Preserve hours.
  - Resident reporting a fallen branch in her yard.

- Subject lost their wallet in Turnbull Canyon.
  - Cars parked at the Hacienda Hills Trailhead before opening.
  - Trailer parked at the Hacienda Hills Trailhead before opening.
  - Reporting a goat was outside the fence.
  - Reporting a bright light in Hellman Park.
  - Reporting a cat at the top of a power pole in Turnbull Canyon.
  - Reporting people smoking at the Black Walnut Trail.
  - Reporting the smell of smoke at the top of Old Canyon.
  - Reporting large branch fell in the road at Powder Canyon.
  - Reporting a loose pitbull in Powder Canyon.
  - Reporting trash dumping on Fullerton Road.
  - Reporting a homeless sleeping at the Turnbull Canyon gate.
  - Resident in Hacienda Heights inquiring about brush clearance.
  - Resident reporting that a tree fell on her gazebo in Hacienda Heights.
  - Resident reporting a dry tree behind her house at Aurora Crest in Whittier.
- Dealt with various violations including:
    - In the Preserve after hours at Hacienda Heights, Hellman Park, Powder Cyn. and Arroyo Pescadero.
    - Parking violations at Powder Canyon, Arroyo Pescadero, Hacienda Hills Trailhead, Sycamore Canyon and Ford property.
    - Loud music in Turnbull Canyon, Powder Canyon, Arroyo Pescadero and Hacienda Hills.
    - Subject cutting cactus pads at the Ford property.
    - Warn and advise electric bikes in Powder Canyon.
    - Dogs in Sycamore Canyon.
    - Dogs off leash at Hacienda Hills, Arroyo Pescadero and Powder Canyon.
    - Filming at Arroyo Pescadero.
    - Bikes in Arroyo Pescadero and Sycamore Canyon.
  - Continue to work closely with Executive Director Andrea Gullo on various projects and assignments as requested.

If you have any questions, or would like any additional information, please feel free to contact me anytime. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*K E Hughes*

Kenn Hughes  
Deputy Chief Ranger

MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: September 19, 2023

To: Citizens Technical Advisory Committee

Prepared by: Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

**Agenda Item X. Update regarding the pilot program for providing dog poop bags at Arroyo Pescadero Trailhead.**

Background:

At the July 20, 2023 Board of Directors meeting, they approved a pilot dog poop bag program at the Arroyo Pescadero Trailhead for 6 months.

Additional Background: In response to a report about dog feces being left on trails at the Arroyo Pescadero Trailhead, the Board directed staff to explore a pilot program for providing dog poop bags. The costs of replenishing the bags every few days would be absorbed in the regular maintenance contract with the MRCA. A pilot program for 3 months would cost \$738, and for 6 months would cost \$1,098. The cost breakdown is as follows:

| <b>Poop bag pilot program</b>  |  |          |
|--|--|----------|
| <u>Arroyo Pescadero Trailhead (initial first month)</u>                              |  |          |
| \$88   | dispenser and 400 bags                   |          |
| \$350  | MRCA installation time and materials     |          |
| <u>\$60</u>  | 800 extra bags                           |          |
| <b>\$498</b>   |  |          |
| <u>Reoccurring monthly costs:</u>  |  |          |
| \$120  | 1,600 bags                               |          |
| <b>Cost per trailhead*</b>   | <b>Cost for Preserve (6 locations**)</b> |          |
| \$738  | first 3 months                           | \$4,428  |
| \$1,098  | first 6 months                           | \$6,588  |
| \$1,818  | first year                               | \$10,908 |
| \$1,440  | second year - just bags                  | \$8,640  |
| * Costs do not include replacement, maintenance, vandalism repair, bag replenishment |  |          |
| **Arroyo Pescadero, Hellman, Turnbull, Hacienda Hills, Powder Canyon two entrances   |  |          |

Considerations for the Board were the costs as outlined above, future operational rules, and public reliance on bags. The Board has previously discussed banning dogs at some point in the future due to environmental impacts and trail user conflicts. Staff can rely on biological data from its studies, such as Authority wildlife cameras, to be analyzed before possibly reapproaching the topic. Also, the “leave no trace” message has been one that staff and rangers have promoted throughout the years, and public reliance on bags being provided may hamper trail user responsibility.

The Arroyo Pescadero Trailhead is an appropriate location for a pilot program because this location is anecdotally a popular trailhead for trail users with dogs, and it has seven existing trash cans for trail users to discard waste. Other trailheads average one to three trashcans. With assistance from Habitat Authority volunteers, Habitat staff will provide a report at a later date about the effectiveness of the pilot program.

Recommendation:

Receive and file.

MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: September 19, 2023

To: Citizens Technical Advisory Committee

Prepared by: Michelle Mariscal, Ecologist

Through: Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

Agenda Item: **XI. Discussion regarding potential in-lieu fee mitigation restoration project of 12 acres of habitat on the Authority's properties.**

Background:

A new in-lieu fee mitigation project is before the Board for consideration. The project needing mitigation is the Montebello Hills Development and Conservation Project, a housing development, in the city of Montebello, Los Angeles County. The development is adjacent to the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area and approximately 2.3 miles from the western-most border of the Puente Hills Preserve. In accordance with section 10 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) advised that the project's permanent impacts to habitat suitable for the coastal California gnatcatcher be offset through enhancement, creation and permanent conservation of coastal sage scrub (CSS) habitat, the majority of which will occur onsite. The remaining acreage that cannot be accommodated onsite (anticipated to be approximately 12 acres) is proposed to occur within designated gnatcatcher critical habitat on the Puente Hills Preserve. The exact location within the Preserve is still being determined.

The overall budget will be finalized once a site has been confirmed but is expected to result in a payment to the Habitat Authority of approximately \$2.4 million to implement the restoration, including the access fee (\$240,000). Consistent with past Authority projects, the access fee for CSS mitigation is \$20,000 per acre. Additionally, the Project Proponent (Toll Brothers) would need to make a deposit with a community foundation to create a long-term endowment to manage the site.

Habitat Restoration

Restoration costs were estimated based in part on quotes from outside contractors. A habitat restoration plan will need to be developed shortly after execution of the agreement in coordination with USFWS. The restoration is expected to include two years of grow and kill cycles prior to plant installation and five years of site maintenance thereafter, or until success criteria have been achieved. As with the previous Authority mitigation projects, by

executing the Mitigation Agreement the Authority will be committing to implementing the mitigation for the Project Proponent and meeting success criteria using the above-mentioned funding. Except in the case of *force majeure* (occurrences beyond the reasonable control of a party), the Project Proponent would not be responsible for any further financial contributions.

In developing the cost estimate, staff requested proposals directly from Land IQ for biological monitoring and from Nakae and Associates for the landscaping services. Staff would be requesting that non-bid contracts be executed upon the approval, execution and associated payment of the Mitigation Agreement between the Project Proponent and the Authority. Noncompetitive procurement in this case would be in the best interest of the Authority.

Land IQ and Nakae are recommended as non-bid contractors because (1) the proposed consultants are known to possess the needed experience and qualifications as they have successfully implemented several landscape contracts, and are the most satisfactory for Habitat Authority purposes, (2) the project under consideration is unique and specialized enough that a low bid would entail undue risk, (3) the proposed consultants are uniquely familiar with the Habitat Authority's Preserve, and (4) this proposed project will likely tie into existing irrigation installed and operated by Nakae for other Authority mitigation projects and use of this irrigation by another contractor could jeopardize current projects.

Their services are offered at fair and reasonable prices. Therefore, they are the most satisfactory for Authority purposes.

#### Conservation Easement

Conveyance of a conservation easement for the 12 acres of coastal sage scrub to an appropriate entity will be required. The Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA), a local joint powers authority, has been identified in the past as an acceptable entity. The same terms and wording of the conservation easement used for the most recent mitigation project, Brea 57 Lambert, would be expected to be used for this new project. A survey and legal description can commence after the site has been cleared. The Authority typically has two years to record the easement from the effective date of the agreement.

#### Long-term Management Plan (LTMP)

The Authority will draft a LTMP for USFWS approval. Long-term management of the site would be funded by an endowment in favor of the Authority established by the Project Proponent with The San Diego Foundation that would annually generate approximately \$43,500 plus 2.5% projected inflation. This funding would be self-sustaining with the assumption that it will not be accessed until success criteria have been met. The beginning corpus for the endowment is still being determined. Annual reports will need to be submitted to The San Diego Foundation and USFWS for annual release of the management funds with the USFWS' approval. The annual endowment funds will need to be spent in accordance with the Long-term Management Program. The endowment will

not be owned by the Authority, however the Authority will be the recipient of the annual returns. There is built-in flexibility in the Long-term Management Program to adjust management activities as site conditions warrant and as endowment funds are available. An endowment will also be created for the conservation easement holder in order for them to monitor that the conservation resources of the site are protected.

The following is a summary of tasks to complete should the Authority move forward with this project:

### Tasks

- Identify restoration site location.
- Mitigation Agreement between Habitat Authority (HA) and Project Proponent. Needs HA Board approval.
- Conservation Easement draft document between WCA (expected) and Habitat Authority. Needs HA Board approval.
- Long-term Management Plan. USFWS approval needed.
- The San Diego Foundation Endowment Agreements with Project Proponent. Needs HA Board approval.
- HA hire consultants and contractors. Needs HA Board approval.
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA)
- Habitat Restoration Plan. USFWS approval needed.

### Further Information

The mitigation program proposed above is consistent with the Authority's Resource Management Plan and mission. It will result in acreage in the Preserve that currently consists of non-native vegetation to be restored to native habitat. This in turn will increase the biodiversity of the Habitat Authority's Preserve. Long-term management and protection of the 12 acres of coastal sage scrub, which could be capable of supporting the federally protected coastal California gnatcatcher, will be ensured by the associated long-term management endowment and conservation easement.

With final action from the Habitat Authority and the Project Proponent, the current estimated anticipated schedule with all the restoration and monitoring/reporting activities would be as follows:

| <b>Fiscal Year</b>     | <b>Restoration Activity</b>                | <b>Monitoring/Reporting</b>  |
|------------------------|--|--|
| July 2023 to June 2024 | Site prep year 1: May 2024 to June 2024    | Hire consultants/contractors, develop Habitat Restoration Plan, conduct Phase 1 ESA, order seeds |
| July 2024 to June 2025 | Site Prep Year 1: July 2024 to April 2025; |  |

|                        |  |  |
|------------------------|--|--|
|                        | Site Prep Year 2: May 2025 to June 2025  |  |
| July 2025 to June 2026 | Site Prep Year 2: July 2025 to January 2026;<br>Installation Feb/March 2026;<br>120-day Plant Establishment Period (PEP) March-June 2026 | Establishment Monitoring May/June 2026   |
| July 2026 to June 2027 | Maintenance Year 1   | Installation and Establishment Report Dec 2026; April 2027 Year 1 Performance Monitoring |
| July 2027 to June 2028 | Maintenance Year 2   | Year 1 Annual Report Dec 2027; April 2028 Year 2 Performance Monitoring                  |
| July 2028 to June 2029 | Maintenance Year 3   | Year 2 Annual Report Dec 2028; April 2029 Year 3 Performance Monitoring                  |
| July 2029 to June 2030 | Maintenance Year 4   | Year 3 Annual Report Dec 2029; April 2030 Year 4 Performance Monitoring                  |
| July 2030 to June 2031 | Maintenance Year 5   | Year 4 Annual Report Dec 2030; April 2031 Year 5 Performance Monitoring                  |
| July to Dec 2031       |  | Year 5 Annual Report Dec 2031 – Sign-off   |

Fiscal Impact:

This project is expected to have no negative fiscal impact. The access fees would be a gain of \$240,000 for the Authority.

Recommendation:

Receive and file.



MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: September 19, 2023

To: Citizens Technical Advisory Committee

Prepared by: Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

**Agenda Item XII. Receive and file information about Authority volunteers recognized for their contributions: Pam Hill, Tom Merlino, and Lee Willard.**

Background:

Three outstanding volunteers -- Pam Hill, Tom Merlino, and Lee Willard -- were recognized for their valuable contributions for the Authority in September 2023.

As you know, our volunteers' time is extremely valuable in helping the Authority maintain its trails, host Meetup.com and process the wildlife camera digital photos. The Authority volunteer program is made up of a group of very talented and conscientious individuals that are helping to promote the agency's mission and stewardship of the Authority's Puente Hills Preserve.

The attached is a description of the volunteer-of-the-year award winners and their valuable contributions. We ask that the volunteers contribute at least 48 hours annually, and all of these recognized volunteers contributed many more than that this past fiscal year.

Recommendation:

That the Committee receive and file information about the above volunteers receiving special recognition.

Attachments:

Details about the award recipients

**PUENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY**

**2023 VOLUNTEER AWARD RECIPIENTS**

**SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR CONTRIBUTIONS**

**Pam Hill**

Pam Hill is a Whittier resident and teaches geology at California State University, Long Beach, but still finds the time to hike and trail watch in the Preserve. She has been a docent volunteer since 2015 and was unofficially reporting her observations to us on her many hikes in the hills until completing her Trail Watch training in 2017. Pam was previously recognized for her outstanding volunteer services in 2016, 2018 and 2021. This past fiscal year she put in the **most volunteer hours overall** by logging **86.18** hours primarily as a Trail Watch volunteer. We don't know how she does it, but we very much appreciate it!

**Tom Merlino**

Tom Merlino, a resident of Whittier, joined the Authority's volunteer team in 2019 and received our Overall Volunteer of the Year recognition that same year. He went onto receive an appreciation award in 2020, as well. Tom has continued that good work this year, dedicating over 48 hours towards processing the images collected by the wildlife study's trail cameras. The ecologist has come to rely on his steadfast devotion to processing images, thus making him an asset to the wildlife camera study team. Tom has also stepped up to be the administrator for the Habitat Authority's Meetup.com monthly public hikes, which has greatly helped the staff. He volunteered **71.75** hours overall.

**Lee Willard**

Lee Willard lives in Whittier and first began volunteering for the Habitat Authority in 2011 as a docent. The following year he completed Trail Watch training and has since spent countless hours hiking the trails and reporting back to rangers. Lee loves our hills and has long been active with Hills for Everyone, Friends of the Whittier Hills and Sierra Club. In 2012 and 2018, Lee was awarded our Trail Watch Volunteer of the Year. This past year he donated **60.50** precious hours in helping the rangers keep the Preserve trails safe and clean. He is an asset to our Trail Watch program and we greatly appreciate his service!