

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

**October 20, 2021, Wednesday, 7 p.m.**

**LOCATION:**

**This meeting will take place remotely in accordance with Government Code section 54953(e) et seq. (AB 361). Members of the public can observe and participate in the meeting as follows:**

**Via video (Zoom) and telephonically by joining at this address:**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85872784842>** Meeting ID: 858 7278 4842

**- Or - Phone by joining at these numbers:** +1 (669) 900 6833 or +1 (253) 215 8782

Meeting ID: 858 7278 4842 , Find your local number:

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kc7sbW26bW>**

Charles Lawrence, Chair	Whittier
Shelley Andros	Whittier
Ray Wong	Whittier
Roy Francis, Vice Chair	La Habra Heights
Catherine Houwen	La Habra Heights
Adam Nazaroff	La Habra Heights
Karen Chang	County of Los Angeles
John Houser	County of Los Angeles
Gina Natoli	County of Los Angeles

**Members of the public may provide electronic comments by Tuesday, October 19, 2021, by 4:00 p.m. to [mmiller@HabitatAuthority.org](mailto:mmiller@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.**

Pursuant to Section 54956 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:

**AGENDA**

- I. Call to order.
- II. Roll call.
- III. Public comments.
- IV. Approval of Minutes for the September 14, 2021, Regular Meeting.
- V. Standing Reports:
  - a) Report from social media subcommittee.
  - b) Committee Member feedback from the public as it relates to the Habitat Authority.
- VI. Discussion, receive and file August 2021 Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) Ranger Report.

- VII. Discuss and update regarding Brown Act Compliance for remote meetings following Assembly Bill No. 361.
- VIII. Receive and file information about Authority volunteers recognized for their contributions: Claudia Alvarez, Licha Gonzales, and Pam Hill.
- IX. Discussion and update regarding renaming a trail or designating an overlook station in honor of service to the agency provided by former Board Member, Bob Henderson.
- X. Discussion and update regarding contract for multiple tree removals on Authority owned properties. This project is funded by a grant from the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles River and Mountains Conservancy.
- XI. Discussion and update regarding purchasing a mower. This project is funded by a grant from the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles River and Mountains Conservancy.
- XII. Discussion and update regarding contract for roof replacement on Authority owned property.
- XIII. Discussion and update regarding entering into an agreement with S & S Seeds Inc. for collection of native seeds from the Authority's properties at no cost.
- XIV. Discussion, Committee members' statements, Executive Director's comments, responses or questions.
- XV. Adjournment and announcement of 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. NOTE: 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). Questions about any agenda item can be addressed to Andrea Gullo, Executive Director, 562.945.9003. NOTE: Members of the public may address the Committee on any item shown on the agenda. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, if you require a disability related modification or accommodation to attend or participate in this meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please call Melissa Miller at the Habitat Authority office 562.945.9003, at least 48 hours prior to this meeting.

DRAFT Minutes  
PUENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY  
CITIZENS TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
September 14, 2021

The regular meeting of the Citizens Technical Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, September 14, 2021, via video and telephonically.

**I. CALL TO ORDER.**

The Chair, Charles Lawrence, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:06 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL.**

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

<b>Members Present:</b>	Shelley Andros	Whittier
	Charles Lawrence, Chair	Whittier
	John Houser	County of Los Angeles
	Catherine Houwen	La Habra Heights
	Adam Nazaroff	La Habra Heights

<b>Members Absent:</b>	Roy Francis, Vice Chair	La Habra Heights
	Gina Natoli	County of Los Angeles
	Karen Chang	County of Los Angeles
	Ray Wong	Whittier

**Authority Representatives Present:**

Andrea Gullo, Executive Director  
Michelle Mariscal, Ecologist  
Melissa Miller, Administrative Assistant  
Kenn Hughes, Deputy Chief Ranger, Mountains Recreation  
and Conservation Authority (MRCA)

**Members of the  
Public Present:** none

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS.**

There were no public comments.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE AUGUST 24, 2021, ADJOURNED  
REGULAR MEETING.**

Member Andros motioned to approve these minutes as drafted.  
Member Houwen seconded this motion, and in a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

**V. STANDING REPORTS:**

**a. REPORT FROM SOCIAL MEDIA SUBCOMMITTEE.**

Member Andros reported that the activity level on this month's Authority social media platforms has been relatively slow but all positive, especially the reaction to the posting about coyotes on Facebook.

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

Member Nazaroff reported that Los Angeles County's new gate at the end of Punta Del Este Drive in Hacienda Heights seems to be finished.

**VI. DISCUSSION, RECEIVE AND FILE JUNE AND JULY 2021 MOUNTAINS RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY (MRCA) RANGER REPORTS.**

Deputy Chief Ranger Hughes reviewed these reports and answered the Committee's few questions. The Committee received and filed these reports.

**VII. PRESENTATION, RECEIVE AND FILE STATUS UPDATE REGARDING ONGOING AUTHORITY CAMERA STUDY THAT INVESTIGATES WILDLIFE AND RECREATIONAL USE PATTERNS ACROSS THE HABITAT AUTHORITY'S PRESERVE.**

Ecologist Mariscal provided a PowerPoint presentation reviewing the data collected so far from the camera study the Authority has been conducting since the beginning of 2020, noting that no bobcats and only a few coyotes have been seen to have mange. She reported that no conclusions have been drawn from the data yet, and she expects a final report to be completed in the earlier part of 2022. The Committee received and filed this update.

**VIII. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGARDING APPROVING UPDATES TO THE AUTHORITY FISCAL POLICY IN REGARD TO BANK ACCOUNTS.**

Executive Director Gullo presented this item, adding that in section 9.b on page 4 the words "the Authority" should be removed from the second line, for clarity.

Member Nazaroff motioned to recommend to the Board of Directors that they approve this updated fiscal policy as drafted. Member Houwen seconded this motion, and in a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

**IX. DISCUSSION REGARDING CONDUCTING AUTHORITY MEETINGS IN-PERSON, VIRTUALLY, OR A HYBRID OF THE TWO; UPDATE ON STATUS OF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 29-20, UPDATED EXECUTIVE ORDERS, PENDING LEGISLATION.**

Executive Director Gullo advised that the Board of Directors will be discussing this issue at their meeting this week, and that Assembly Bill 361 regarding the extension of Executive Order No. 29-20 is currently on the governor's desk awaiting approval. She added that she will email to the Committee with an update after the Board's meeting, but meanwhile the Committee should plan on their meetings continuing in the virtual format that has been used since the pandemic's beginning.

**X. DISCUSSION, COMMITTEE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS, RESPONSES OR QUESTIONS.**

Executive Director Gullo reported that at tonight's Whittier City Council meeting, they are addressing the issue of honoring former Councilman and Board Director Bob Henderson, and that she will update the Committee about this at the next meeting.

Chair Lawrence noted today's news article regarding the grants just awarded by the State of California, including to the Authority and the City of La Habra Heights, to reduce fire hazards and increase education about wildfire dangers. Executive Director Gullo thanked the many agencies and people who submitted letters in support of awarding this newly announced grant to the Authority.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING.**

There being no further comments, or business to be discussed, Chair Lawrence adjourned the meeting at 8:07 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting date is October 19, 2021.



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, 2021

**Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority  
Ranger Services Activities for August 2021**

- 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 Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority cabinet meeting.
- Opened Hellman Park to pedestrians only. Posted new signs.
- Attended the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (Habitat Authority) Board meeting and the Citizens Technical Advisory Committee meeting.
- Participated in the Habitat Authority monthly management meeting.
- Participated in our ranger monthly management meeting.
- Attended Habitat Authority volunteer meeting.
- Participated in the Hacienda Heights Improvement Association monthly meeting.
- Met with fire captain for station 91 on Turnbull Canyon Road in Hacienda Heights. Provided the Habitat Authority emergency maps.
- Met with the contractors regarding the Heli-hydrant at the Diaz Property in La Habra Heights. Provided my contact information.
- Continue to notify the Habitat Authority staff of all unsuccessful animal road crossings that are observed at or near Habitat Authority property. During the month of August the following animal was observed.
  - Coyote on Harbor Blvd.
- Picked up dumping including:
  - Sofas in Powder Canyon. Donated to Goodwill.
  - Dead pig on Fullerton Road. Reported to Animal Care & Control.

- Continue to monitor the Harbor underpass. Cleaned a small amount of graffiti and trash.
- Continue to pick up dog defecation at all the trailheads.
- Continue to patrol the SCE, Brea 57 site and Monterey mitigation sites in Powder Canyon and the Olinda site in Arroyo San Miguel.
- 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 once in August.
- 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. Whittier Police has shared that our cameras have let to several warrants being issues for suspects.
- Continue to contact the Los Angeles County Department of Street Maintenance regarding the graffiti along Turnbull Canyon 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.
- Dealt with various violations including:
  - In the Preserve after hours at Hellman Park, Hacienda Heights, Powder Cyn. and Arroyo Pescadero.
  - Parking violations at Powder Canyon, Arroyo Pescadero, Hacienda Hills Trailhead, Sycamore Canyon and Ford property.
  - Loud music in Arroyo Pescadero and Hacienda Hills.
  - Marijuana at Hacienda Hills Trailhead.
  - Alcohol in Arroyo Pescadero and Turnbull Canyon.
  - Inhaling nitrous oxide gas on Turnbull Canyon.
  - Bow and arrows in Turnbull Canyon.
  - Flying a drone in Turnbull Canyon and at Hacienda Hills Trailhead.
  - Warn and advise electric bikes in Powder Canyon.
  - Dogs off leash at Hacienda Hills and Arroyo Pescadero.
  - Bikes in Arroyo Pescadero and Sycamore Canyon.
- The rangers were notified of a meeting regarding an organized electric bike ride in Hacienda Heights. Arrived at the meeting location, unable to locate the participants.
- Report of gunshots at Turnbull Canyon/Skyline. Unable to locate.
- Report of a fire at Colima Road/ Skyline. Unable to locate.

- Repair ADA sign at Powder Canyon.
- Report of homeless in Hacienda Heights. Searched for three days. Received additional information, just two men hiking with large backpacks.
- 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 August to our 24-hour ranger emergency services number including:
  - Caller inquiring when Hellman Park will be open.
  - Reporting loose dog in Powder Canyon.
  - Hiker locked in at Hellman Park.
  - Reporting dead coyote on Harbor Blvd.
  - Resident in Hacienda Heights reporting a coyote on her front lawn, possibly injured.
  - Reporting a dead coyote on the trail in Hacienda Heights.
  - Hiker in Hacienda Heights reporting that she saw a little coyote.
  - Hiker reporting a dead dog on the trail in Hacienda Heights.
  - Reporting a cut fence at Orange Grove Park.
  - Hiker locked in at the Hacienda Hills Trailhead.
  - Whittier Police reporting a possible missing person.
  - Hiker inquiring if all the trails are open.
  - Inquiring for more information on the Habitat Authority.
  - Inquiring when Hellman Park opens.
  - Hike stating that a coyote was stalking them in Sycamore Canyon.
  - Reporting two hikers with dogs are locked in at the Hacienda Hills Trailhead.
  - Reporting lost keys at Hellman Park.
  - Reporting hikers in the Preserve before it opens at the Hacienda Hills Trailhead.
  - Reporting kids on the trail with large oxygen tank.
- 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: October 20, 2021

To: Citizens Technical Advisory Committee

Prepared by: Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

Agenda Item: **VII. Discuss and update regarding Brown Act Compliance for remote meetings following Assembly Bill No. 361.**

Due to a newly adopted California virtual meeting law, the Authority Board of Directors' meeting was held prior to the Advisory Committee's meeting this month. Attached is the staff report from that Board meeting held at 3 p.m. October 20, 2021, and an update will be provided on what action was taken.

Puente Hills  
Habitat Preservation Authority  
Endowment Provided by the Puente Hills Landfill

MEMORANDUM

**Date:** October 20, 2021

**To:** Board Members

**From:**   
Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

**Subject:** Agenda Item No. 3f) Board adoption of Authority Resolution No. 2021-03 A Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority Proclaiming a Local Emergency and Authorizing the Transition to Use of Remote Teleconference Meeting Procedures by the Board of Directors and All Standing Committees of the Authority, as authorized by Government Code Section 54953(e) *et seq.*, for the Initial Period of October 20, 2021, through November 19, 2021.

Recommendation:

That the Board adopt the attached resolution.

Background:

The following information is provided from Authority attorneys:

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On September 16, 2021, Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill 361 into law, allowing continued remote teleconference meetings without traditional Brown Act compliance, provided certain findings can be made related to the ongoing state of emergency and subject to adherence to certain new noticing and public participation requirements. AB 361 was made effective October 1, 2021.

The Authority, as all public agencies in California, must now invoke and adhere to AB 361 and its modifications on certain elements of remote public meetings, or else revert to traditional Brown Act compliance. The major change associated with continuing remote meetings under AB 361 is that the public must now be allowed to make comments in real-time during the public comment period, either telephonically or electronically (such as by Zoom). No physical location for public comment need be provided.

AB 361 allows legislative bodies to continue to utilize remote/virtual platforms for meetings during a state of emergency proclaimed by the Governor that includes the Authority, provided that one of the following three criteria is met with respect to the meeting:

- i) State or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing; or
- ii) The legislative body is meeting for the purpose of determining, by majority vote, whether as a result of the state of emergency, meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees; or

- iii) The legislative has previously determined, by majority vote, that, as a result of the state of emergency, meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees.

The proclaimed statewide declaration of emergency related to COVID-19 remains in effect. Accordingly, if just, then the Authority can conduct meetings remotely pursuant to Government Code § 54953(e) as amended by AB 361, subject to compliance with certain alternative noticing and public participation requirements, and in doing so are excused from compliance with the traditional requirements of the Brown Act that would otherwise apply to remote teleconferenced meetings under Government Code § 54953(b)(3).

No later than 30 days after teleconferencing for the first time under AB 361 rules, and every 30 days thereafter, the Board must adopt a resolution making the required findings of necessity to continue conducting public meetings remotely in reliance of AB 361 and affirming the measures in place to allow remote public comments by the public.

These provisions of AB 361 are effective until January 1, 2024. This means these provisions may be invoked any time there is a proclaimed state of emergency by the Governor (e.g., wildfires) and the Board can make at least one of the enumerated findings.

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-03

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE PUENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY PROCLAIMING A LOCAL EMERGENCY AND AUTHORIZING THE TRANSITION TO USE OF REMOTE TELECONFERENCE MEETING PROCEDURES BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ALL STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE AUTHORITY, AS AUTHORIZED BY GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54953(E) *ET SEQ.*, FOR THE INITIAL PERIOD OF OCTOBER 20, 2021 THROUGH NOVEMBER 19, 2021

WHEREAS, the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (the “Authority”) is committed to preserving and nurturing public access, transparency, observation and participation in meetings of the Board of Directors (the “Board”) and each of its standing committees; and

WHEREAS, all meetings of the Board and standing committees are open and public, as required by the Ralph M. Brown Act, codified in Government Code sections 54950 *et seq.*, so that any member of the public may attend, participate, and observe the Board and standing committees conduct their business; and

WHEREAS, the Brown Act, as amended by Assembly Bill 361 (2021), codified in Government Code sections 54953(e) *et seq.*, allows for remote teleconferencing observation and participation in meetings by members of a legislative body and members of the public, without compliance with the requirements of Government Code section 54953(b)(3) regarding teleconferencing, subject to the existence of certain conditions; and

WHEREAS, the initial required condition is that a state of emergency is a declaration of a state of emergency by the Governor pursuant to the California Emergency Services Act at Government Code section 8625, proclaiming the existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the state and within the boundaries of the Authority, caused by conditions as described in Government Code section 8558; and

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, pursuant to Government Code section 8625, Governor Newsom declared the existence of a state of emergency for the State of California, in response to the outbreak of respiratory illness due to a novel coronavirus (a disease now known as COVID-19); and

WHEREAS, also on March 4, 2020, the County of Los Angeles followed suit and declared the existence of a state of emergency for the County of Los Angeles; and

WHEREAS, Government Code section 54953(e) *et seq.* further requires that state or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing; or, the legislative body of the Authority finds that meeting in person would present imminent risk to the health and safety of attendees; and

WHEREAS, the Board hereby finds that such emergency conditions now exist in the Authority, such that meeting in person for the meetings of the Board and standing committees of

the Authority would present imminent risk to the health and safety of attendees as a result of the increased risk of the spread of the COVID-19 virus among those in attendance; and

WHEREAS, the Board hereby finds that the state of emergency due to the COVID-19 virus and the conditions related thereto has caused, and will continue to cause, conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons within the Authority that are likely to be beyond the control of services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of the Authority, and thereby affirms, authorizes, and proclaims the existence of a local emergency and ratifies the proclamation of state of emergency by the Governor of the State of California; and

WHEREAS, the Board hereby finds that, as a consequence of the existing local emergency, the Board and all standing committees of the Authority shall conduct their meetings without compliance with Government Code section 54953(b)(3), and shall instead comply with the remote teleconference meeting requirements as authorized by Government Code section 54953(e) *et seq.*; and

WHEREAS, the Board affirms that it will allow for observation and participation by Board Members, Advisory Committee Members and the public via video and/or telephone access, in an effort to protect the constitutional and statutory rights of all attendees.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE PUENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY FINDS, RESOLVES, AND ORDERS AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. The Recitals set forth above are true and correct and are incorporated into this Resolution by this reference.

Section 2. The Board hereby recognizes and affirms the existence and conditions of a state of emergency as proclaimed by the Governor, the existence of emergency conditions in the Authority, and affirms, authorizes, and proclaims the existence of a local emergency throughout the Authority.

Section 3. The Board hereby ratifies the Governor of the State of California's Proclamation of State of Emergency, effective as of its issuance date of March 4, 2020.

Section 4. Further, the Board finds that holding the meetings of the Board and standing committees of the Authority in person would present imminent risk to the health and safety of attendees as a result of the increased risk of the spread of the COVID-19 virus among those in attendance, as required by Government Code section 54953(e) *et seq.*

Section 5. The Executive Director is hereby authorized and directed to take all actions necessary to carry out the intent and purpose of this Resolution including, conducting open and public meetings in accordance with Government Code section 54953(e) and other applicable provisions of the Brown Act, for all Board meetings and all standing committee meetings of the Authority.

Section 6. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption and shall be effective until the earlier of (i) November 19, 2021 , or such time the Board adopts a subsequent resolution in accordance with Government Code section 54953(e)(3) to extend the time during which the Board and all standing committees of the Authority may continue to teleconference without compliance with Government Code section 54953(b)(3), but otherwise as permitted by Government Code section 54953(e) *et seq.*.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** at the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority duly held on 20th day of October, 2021, by the following vote:

**AYES:** Board Members:  
**NOES:** Board Members:  
**ABSENT:** Board Members:  
**ABSTAIN:** Board Members:

**WITNESS** my hand on this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

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Melissa Miller , Secretary

MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: October 20, 2021

To: Citizens Technical Advisory Committee

Prepared by: Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

Agenda Item: **VIII. Receive and file information about Authority volunteers recognized for their contributions: Claudia Alvarez, Licha Gonzales, and Pam Hill.**


Due to a newly adopted California virtual meeting law, the Authority Board of Directors' meeting was held prior to the Advisory Committee's meeting this month. Attached is the staff report from that Board meeting held at 3 p.m. October 20, 2021.

Puente Hills  
Habitat Preservation Authority  
Endowment Provided by the Puente Hills Landfill

MEMORANDUM

**Date:** October 20, 2021

**To:** Board Members

**From:**   
Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

**Subject:** Agenda Item No. 3d) Receive and file information about Authority volunteers recognized for their contributions: Claudia Alvarez, Licha Gonzales and Pam Hill.

Recommendation:

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

Background:

Three outstanding volunteers -- Claudia Alvarez, Licha Gonzales and Pam Hill-- were recognized for their valuable contributions for the Authority on October 10, 2021.

As you know our volunteers' time is extremely valuable in helping the Authority maintain its trails 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 winners and their valuable contributions. We ask that the volunteers contribute at least 48 hours annually, and all of these recognized volunteers contributed much more than that this past fiscal year.

## PUENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY

### 2020-21 VOLUNTEER AWARD RECIPIENTS

#### SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

##### Claudia Alvarez – Overall Volunteer of the Year

Claudia Alvarez began volunteering for the Habitat Authority in December of 2019 and has assisted the ecologist with the wildlife camera study and Geospatial Information Systems tasks, as well as participating in several other volunteer opportunities. She was previously recognized for her valuable volunteer contributions in 2020, and overall, she logged over **143 volunteer hours** during FY 20-21. Claudia has recently graduated from Whittier College and is currently enrolled in the Geospatial Information Master's Degree Program at Cal State University, Long Beach. Although she is now a full-time graduate student, Claudia continues to be an integral part of our wildlife camera study team, devoting several hours each week to processing camera images. Her attention to detail and dedication to her volunteer role has made her an asset to the Habitat Authority and we are grateful for her contributions!

##### Eloise 'Licha' Gonzales

Eloise ("Licha") Gonzales, of Rowland Heights, is a retired teacher who became a volunteer in 2011. Since then, Licha has been actively trail-watching in the Preserve at the Powder Canyon Trailhead, hiking with her dog and friends during the nice morning hours. Licha also continues to venture out in the evenings, to walk through what was our 10,000 steps hike, to keep healthy and active. She previously was awarded for her outstanding contributions for the Habitat Authority in 2015, 2018 and 2020. This year she continues to dedicate her time towards stewardship and educating Preserve visitors through her interactions on the trails and has logged **over 103 hours** of volunteer service.

##### Pam Hill

Pam Hill is a Whittier resident and geology professor. She has been a Docent volunteer since 2015 and unofficially reported her observations to us from her many hikes in the hills. In 2017, she completed Trail Watch training and is now 'official' in that capacity. Pam holds multiple degrees and teaches at Cal State Long Beach, but still finds the time to hike and trail-watch in the Preserve. She previously was awarded for her outstanding volunteer services in 2016 and 2018, and this year dedicated **over 75 hours** as a Trail Watch volunteer. We don't know how she finds the time, but we very much appreciate it!

MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: October 20, 2021

To: Citizens Technical Advisory Committee

Prepared by: Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

Agenda Item: **IX. Discussion and update regarding renaming a trail or designating an overlook station in honor of service to the agency provided by former Board Member, Bob Henderson.**


Due to a newly adopted California virtual meeting law, the Authority Board of Directors' meeting was held prior to the Advisory Committee's meeting this month. Attached is the staff report from that Board meeting held at 3 p.m. October 20, 2021, and an update will be provided on what action was taken.

Puente Hills  
Habitat Preservation Authority  
Endowment Provided by the Puente Hills Landfill

MEMORANDUM

**Date:** October 20, 2021

**To:** Board Members

**From:**   
Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

**Subject:** Agenda Item No. 4) Discussion and possible action regarding renaming a trail and/or designating an overlook station in honor of service to the agency provided by former Board Member, Bob Henderson.

Recommendation:

That the Board take action and provide direction to staff.

Background:

As the Board is aware, management matters like trail naming, trail hours, fuel clearance, etc. fall under the management authority of the Habitat Authority per the Authority's agreement with the City of Whittier, A97-172. At the July Board meeting, the Board discussed honoring former Board Director and Council Member Bob Henderson for his significant contributions to the agency and preservation of the Puente Hills. Director Ferrante suggested that renaming a trail or trailhead or updating a monument sign as well as holding a recognition ceremony of some kind should both be done, centering on the Whittier area.

At the Whittier City Council meeting held September 13, the Council voted to rename the Mariposa Trail after Mr. Henderson. The Mariposa Trail travels across City- and Habitat-owned land in the Hellman Park area. Consistent with a subsequent partnership conversation between city staff, Vice Chair Sulic and Authority staff in consideration of Mr. Henderson's wishes, an overlook and/or renaming of the Arroyo Pescadero Loop Trail at the Arroyo Pescadero Trailhead is being presented to the Board for consideration. An overlook display will allow for an explanation of historical efforts involving preservation of the hills. Mr. Henderson has been consulted. See the attached map for orientation.

The cost for an overlook and renaming of a trail would be approximately \$11,000. Staff would need to obtain three bids for the construction and installation portion of the overlook (also called a wayside display) if directed by the Board. The Authority contractor, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, installed the two existing wayside displays at the Arroyo Pescadero Trailhead, pictured below, however they are unavailable to construct and install another. The design of the display, redesign of the trailheads maps, and ordering and installation of the new trail signs could be accomplished through other Authority efforts and contracts. Cost of the dedication ceremony has not been priced out. Due to limited staff, the Authority would need assistance from its partners in hosting the dedication ceremony.



The above photos are of existing overlooks/wayside displays at the trailhead.



⊗ Mark indicates approximate proposed location for overlook, facing north-west.

This matter was last discussed by the Authority's Advisory Committee in July 2021. No conclusions were reached, but three of the members concurred that there be public recognition and naming of something such as a trail or trailhead after Mr. Henderson.

Fiscal Impact:

The project and ceremony costs are estimated to be between \$11,000 and \$15,000. This work is outside of the approved budget. The work could be partially funded with contribution from partners and by the Authority's \$739,200 reserve created from the habitat restoration mitigation program if not from unspent operational funds to be determined at the end of the fiscal year.



## Former councilman: Don't name trail for me

By Mike Sprague [msprague@scnq.com](mailto:msprague@scnq.com)

Whittier City Council members, Habitat Authority board members and friends all want to name a trail — or something at least — after former Whittier Councilman Bob Henderson, the man who many say saved the Whittier hills.

So far, the proposal has only one opponent: Henderson himself. In a Wednesday interview, he said he doesn't like the idea.

"There are so many other people that I think it is kind of ludicrous to point out one person," Henderson said on giving credit for saving the hills.

"It's never one person who did it," he said. "It took so many people to save the hills. At different times, it was different people."

Also, Henderson doesn't believe it to be good policy to name things after living people, especially politicians.

"You see politicians all the time, just as they're getting ready to go off a board or commission, and all of a sudden want things named after them," he said.

"That feeds on each other, and the next politician retires they have to have something named after him or her," Henderson said. "I think it's not a good policy."

Since the 1980s, Henderson was involved in preventing two hillside housing developments, stopping about 1,500 homes, passing the Hillside Preservation Ordinance in 1981 and purchasing 320 acres from Unocal, 960 acres from Chevron Oil Co. and 518 acres in La Habra Heights from a developer.

The chatter of naming a trail after Henderson began after he stepped down from the Puente Hills Habitat Authority Board in May. He was Whittier's only representative to the board for the joint powers agency when it formed in 1994. The agency manages 3,870 acres of public land.

Henderson also served as chairman from the beginning until 2019. His seat on the board became tenuous after he lost his council seat in 2018 to Councilman Henry Bouchot.

Still, at their Tuesday meeting, Whittier council members said they liked the idea of naming a trail — now called Mariposa — after him.

"He told me that things should be named after people when they're gone, passed away," Mayor Joe Vinatieri said about a conversation with Henderson. Vinatieri said he generally agrees with Henderson but added there are exceptions.

"I think it's important we recognize his service," Vinatieri said. "I'd like to honor him while he's still alive."

Councilwoman Cathy Warner said there are numerous examples of facilities named after people when they were still alive. Local examples include the Vic Lopez Auditorium at Whittier High, Ruth B. Shannon Center for the Performing Arts at Whittier College and the Sandra Sanchez Thorstenson football field at California High School.

The council voted 5-0 to name the trail after Henderson, but it's subject to approval by the Habitat Authority. Its board is expected to take up the issue at its October meeting.

Authority board Chairman Michael Hughes said he likes the idea of naming something after Henderson but also wants to defer to him.

"Everybody wants to do something to thank him," Hughes said. "I think it's a great idea, but I don't want to shove it down Bob's throat."

Helen Rahder, a longtime friend of Henderson who served with him on the Whittier council from 1990 to 1994, said something should be named for him.

"The Whittier hills wouldn't be standing today," Rahder said, without Henderson. "There would be 7-Elevens and gas stations there if it weren't for Bob. I have no problem with naming it after a live person because I'd like to enjoy it and walk the trail with him."

Mary Gorman Sullens, founder and president of the Whittier Conservancy, said she understands why Henderson might not want the honor.

"Bob's a very humble man," Sullens said. "I get it. In these times it's important to celebrate people who are living and have done such a service to the community."

MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: October 20, 2021

To: Citizens Technical Advisory Committee

Prepared by: Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

Agenda Item: **X. Discussion and update regarding contract for multiple tree removals on Authority owned properties. This project is funded by a grant from the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles River and Mountains Conservancy.**


Due to a newly adopted California virtual meeting law, the Authority Board of Directors' meeting was held prior to the Advisory Committee's meeting this month. Attached is the staff report from that Board meeting held at 3 p.m. October 20, 2021, and an update will be provided on what action was taken.

Puente Hills  
Habitat Preservation Authority  
Endowment Provided by the Puente Hills Landfill

MEMORANDUM

**Date:** October 20, 2021

**To:** Board Members

**From:**   
Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

**Subject:** Agenda Item No. 5) Discussion and possible action authorizing Executive Director to execute contract with Mariposa Tree Management Inc. in an amount of \$22,500 for multiple tree removals on Authority owned properties in La Habra Heights. This project is funded by a grant from the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles River and Mountains Conservancy.

Recommendation:

Authorize Executive Director to execute a contract with Mariposa Tree Management Inc., the most responsive, responsible bidder, in the amount of \$22,500 for the general scope of work.

Background:

The Board has directed staff and rangers to identify trees for removal to promote safety. Staff identified 46 priority dead or dying trees of various diameters along E. Skyline Drive and Oak Ranch Road in La Habra Heights, 8 trees of secondary priority and 8 trees of third priority in the fuel modification areas of the Habitat Authority's Preserve. Additionally, staff has identified 3 trees that require trimming of dead material as a top priority. The attached map illustrates the location of the targeted trees. Bidders were asked to identify the maximum number of trees for removal or treatment as prioritized by staff while staying within the budget (\$22,500) and specified timeline.

This project is part of a state grant-funded project to reduce the wildfire fuel load in the Puente Hills Preserve this fiscal year. The State of California has enacted the Early Action Budget Act of 2020, which provides funds for the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles River and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) Wildfire Prevention grant program. In accordance with project-associated Board resolution 2021-02, this project is exempt from CEQA, and has been filed with the County of Los Angeles and the State of California.

Per the Authority's joint powers agreement, purchasing and contracting policies are to be consistent with the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts' policies. Solicitation for bids for the tree removal services was made by the Authority consistent with Authority's current Purchasing Policy and consistent with the Sanitation Districts' policy. The request for bids was made available on the Authority's website, and 8 contractors were directly

October 20, 2021

Agenda Item 5

Page 2

notified. A mandatory job walk was held, and 5 contractors attended. Four bids were received by the deadline on October 7<sup>th</sup>.

The following bids were received:

Company	Rates	Priority 1 trees	\$ Amount	Priority 2 trees	\$ Amount	Total
1. Mariposa	\$404.02	#1-49	\$ 19,796.98	3	\$2,703	\$ 22,500.00
2. CA Arborist	\$478	#1-49	\$ 21,988.00	0		\$ 21,988.00
3. Great Scott	varies	#1-49	\$ 22,365.00	0		\$ 22,365.00
4. WCA	varies	#1-25, excludes #16	\$ 22,500.00	0		\$ 22,500.00
5. Tree Pros- Late bid		32 trees	\$ 22,500.00	0		\$ 22,500.00

Mariposa proposed to remove or trim the greatest number of prioritized trees (52) given the timeframe and budget of this contract. Once awarded, the work is expected to be performed in November. They are qualified to implement the work. The bid has been reviewed by RMC staff in accordance with the grant guidelines.

On October 7, notices to all bidders were sent informing them of the intent to award the contract and notifying them that they had until October 14 to submit any protests. At the time that this staff report was written none had been received. An update will be provided at the meeting if any were received.

Additional information:

The RMC awarded the Authority a \$300,000 grant (Table 1). This project is a part of the \$36,850 line item below for removal of dead trees, invasive or highly flammable trees, or flashy fuels. At the August Board meeting, a \$14,350 contract was awarded to Nakae and Associates for invasive tree removal in Whittier. That work has been completed.

Table 1.

RMC20008 Grant		Puente Hills Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention
	FY 21-22	
160,000		*Annual Urban Wildland Interface fuels reduction
36,850		Removal of dead trees, invasive or highly flammable trees, or flashy fuels
		> \$14,350 invasive removal on former Chevron, \$22,500 other removal efforts
72,000		Equipment (Mower)
268,850		Subtotal
11,465		*Project Management 6%
19,685		*Overhead 10%
300,000		Total

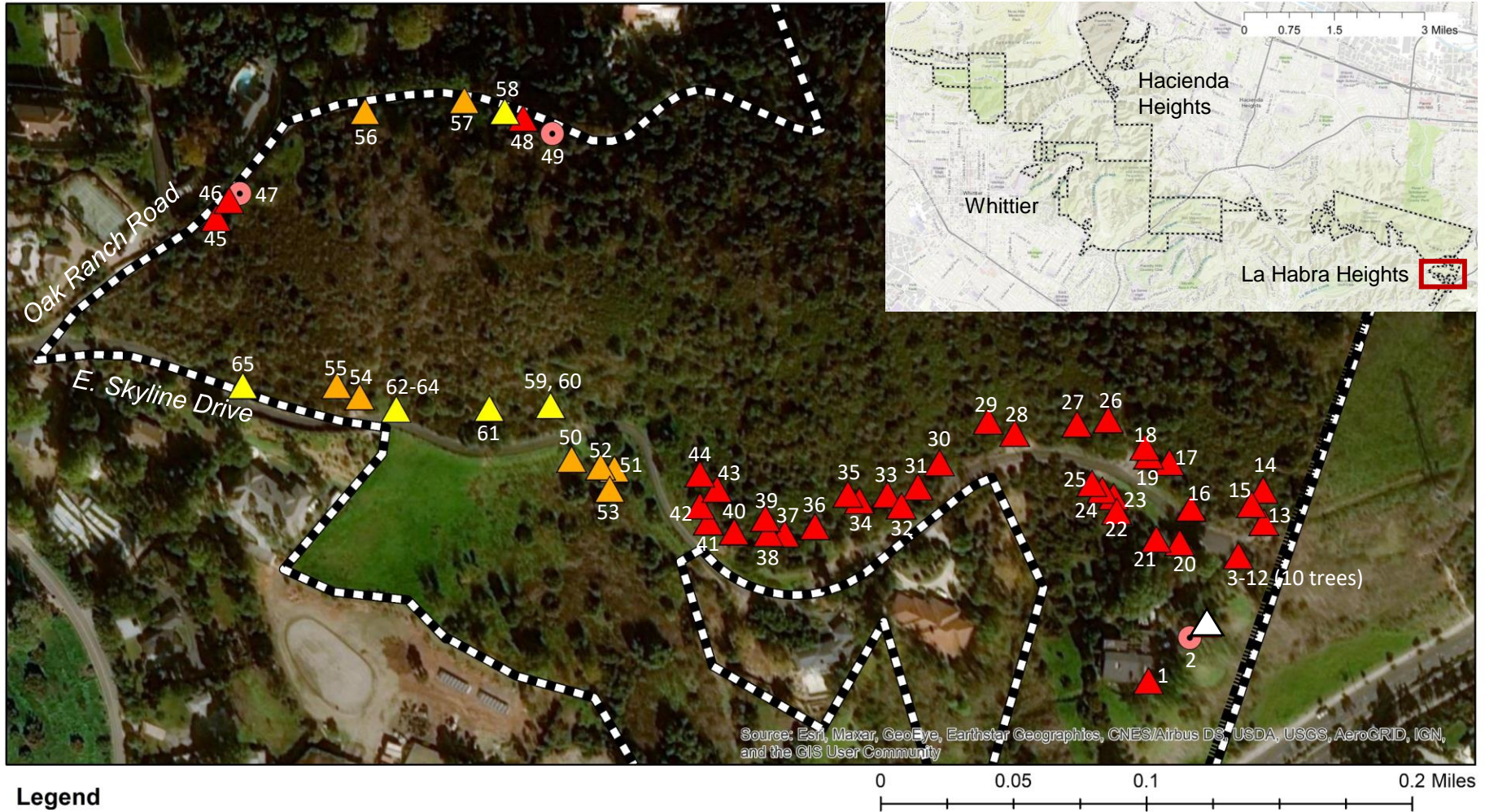
Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact. The work will be funded by the Authority Grant Agreement with the RMC (RMC20008).

# Puente Hills Fuel Reduction Project- Tree Removal RFP

Puente Hills Preserve  
La Habra Heights, CA

**Addendum #1 (September 27, 2021)**



## Legend

- Priority 1- Trim dead limbs (3)
- ▲ Priority 1 (46)
- ▲ Priority 2 (8)
- ▲ Priority 3 (8)
- KEEP (now excluded from scope of work)
- Puente Hills Preserve Boundary

MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: October 20, 2021

To: Citizens Technical Advisory Committee

Prepared by: Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

Agenda Item: **XI. Discussion and update regarding purchasing a mower. This project is funded by a grant from the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles River and Mountains Conservancy.**

Due to a newly adopted California virtual meeting law, the Authority Board of Directors' meeting was held prior to the Advisory Committee's meeting this month. Attached is the staff report from that Board meeting held at 3 p.m. October 20, 2021, and an update will be provided on what action was taken.

Puente Hills  
Habitat Preservation Authority  
Endowment Provided by the Puente Hills Landfill

MEMORANDUM

**Date:** October 20, 2021

**To:** Board Members

**From:**   
Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

**Subject:** Agenda Item No. 6) Discussion and possible action authorizing Executive Director to purchase a mower in the amount of \$60,658.40 from Eberhard Equipment. This project is funded by a grant from the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles River and Mountains Conservancy.

Recommendation:

Authorize Executive Director to issue a purchase order for the purchase of a mower in the amount of \$60,658.40 from Eberhard Equipment.

Background:

At the Authority's May Board meeting, Board resolution 2021-02 was approved which enabled staff to apply for and enter into a grant agreement with the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles River and Mountains Conservancy (RMC). This project is part of a state grant-funded project to reduce the wildfire fuel load in the Puente Hills Preserve this fiscal year. The State of California has enacted the Early Action Budget Act of 2020, which provides funds for the RMC Wildfire Prevention grant program. The grant funds, in part, have been awarded to purchase a mower. Obtaining a mower will enable year-round clearing of trails and emergency access routes. The specifications of the mower were developed in consultation with the Authority's contractor, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA), as they would be operating the equipment. Storage of the mower would be in the Authority's barn at Sycamore Canyon.

Per the Authority's joint powers agreement, purchasing and contracting policies are to be consistent with the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts. The current Authority Purchasing Policies do not address purchasing equipment over \$10,000. In consultation with the Authority's attorney, it was determined that this solicitation for bids process was made by the Authority consistent with the Sanitation Districts' policy to the extent that it was practicable. Also, the bids have been reviewed by RMC staff in accordance with the grant guidelines.

October 20, 2021

Agenda Item 6

Page 2

The following bids were received:

<b>Company</b>	<b>\$ Amount</b>
Eberhard Equipment	60,658.40
Diamond A Equipment	67,879.82
Glenn B. Dorning, Inc	(highest priced bidder) Retracted bid

On October 7, notices to the two bidders were sent informing them of the intent to purchase and notifying them that they had until October 14 to submit any protests. At the time this staff report was written, no objections have been received.

Additional information:

The RMC awarded the Authority a \$300,000 grant (Table 1). This project is a part of the \$72,000 line item below for equipment purchase.

Table 1.

<b>RMC20008 Grant</b>	<b>Puente Hills Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention</b>
FY 21-22	
160,000	<b>*Annual Urban Wildland Interface fuels reduction</b>
36,850	<b>Removal of dead trees, invasive or highly flammable trees, or flashy fuels</b> > \$14,350 invasive removal on former Chevron, \$22,500 other removal efforts
72,000	<b>Equipment (Mower)</b>
<b>268,850</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>
11,465	*Project Management 6%
19,685	*Overhead 10%
<b>300,000</b>	<b>Total</b>

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact. The work will be funded by the Authority Grant Agreement with the RMC (RMC20008).

MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: October 20, 2021

To: Citizens Technical Advisory Committee

Prepared by: Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

Agenda Item: **XII. Discussion and update regarding contract for roof replacement on Authority owned property.**


Due to a newly adopted California virtual meeting law, the Authority Board of Directors' meeting was held prior to the Advisory Committee's meeting this month. Attached is the staff report from that Board meeting held at 3 p.m. October 20, 2021, and an update will be provided on what action was taken.

Puente Hills  
Habitat Preservation Authority  
Endowment Provided by the Puente Hills Landfill

MEMORANDUM

**Date:** October 20, 2021

**To:** Board Members

**From:**   
Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

**Subject:** Agenda Item No. 7) Discussion and possible action authorizing Executive Director to execute contract with Gem Roofing in an amount of \$78,120 for roof replacement on Authority owned property, and amend the agency budget accordingly.

Recommendation:

Authorize Executive Director to execute a contract with the most responsive, responsible bidder in the amount of \$78,120, and authorize appropriate budget amendment for this work.

Background:

The Board directed staff to gather bids to repair/replace the roof of the agency ranger residence located in La Habra Heights per the home inspection report conducted.

Per the Authority's joint powers agreement, purchasing and contracting policies are to be consistent with the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts' policies. The Sanitation Districts have opted to use the alternative bidding procedures provided by the UPCCAA (Uniform Public Contracting Cost Accounting Act), which provides that for public projects between \$60,000 and \$200,000, informal bids must be obtained.

Two job walks were held. The first job walk was held on March 2, 2021 and five companies were contacted, but only one company attended. They submitted a nonresponsive bid. Another attempt for a job walk was scheduled for April 12, 2021, and thirteen companies were contacted. None could attend the job walk; some said they were not interested, and those that expressed interest did not reply, and two stated they could not do prevailing wage. The third attempt at a job walk was scheduled for April 23, 2021, and two companies were contacted. Two companies attended and two bids were received, both of which were responsive.

October 20, 2021

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Page 2

The following bids were received:

<b>Company</b>	<b>\$Amount</b>
Gem Roofing	\$74,000
T5 Roofing	\$75,280

Gem Roofing is the lowest, most responsive and responsible bidder for the work. The Sanitation Districts' personnel assisted in reviewing the bids and, consistent with the bids, confirmed that a roof replacement was necessary. The Sanitation Districts' personnel advised that replacement of the four skylights was also necessary, however that work was not included in the bid. Gem Roofing has agreed to install the skylights at no installation cost except for material costs. Material costs are estimated to be \$4,120. Therefore, the contract price for award is recommended at \$78,120. According to the Sanitation Districts staff, there is the potential for change orders depending on conditions found once work begins.

On October 1, in accordance with the Authority's Purchasing Policies notices to the two bidders were sent informing them of the intent to award the contract and notifying them that they had until October 8 to submit any protests. T5 Roofing stated they had no objections.

#### Fiscal Impact

This work is outside of the approved budget. The work would be funded by the Authority's \$739,200 reserve created from the habitat restoration mitigation program if not from unspent operational funds to be determined at the end of the fiscal year.

MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: October 20, 2021

To: Citizens Technical Advisory Committee

Prepared by: Michelle Mariscal, Ecologist  
Through: Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

Agenda Item: **XIII. Discussion and update regarding entering into an agreement with S & S Seeds Inc. for collection of native seeds from the Authority's properties at no cost.**

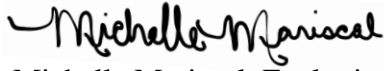
Due to a newly adopted California virtual meeting law, the Authority Board of Directors' meeting was held prior to the Advisory Committee's meeting this month. Attached is the staff report from that Board meeting held at 3 p.m. October 20, 2021, and an update will be provided on what action was taken.

Puente Hills  
Habitat Preservation Authority  
Endowment Provided by the Puente Hills Landfill

MEMORANDUM

**Date:** October 20, 2021

**To:** Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

**From:**   
Michelle Mariscal, Ecologist

**Subject:** Agenda Item No. 8) Discussion and possible action authorizing the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with S & S Seeds Inc. for collection of native seeds from the Authority's properties at no cost.

Recommendation:

That the Board authorize execution of an agreement with S & S Seeds Inc. for collection of native seeds.

Background:

S & S Seeds recently approached the Habitat Authority to request permission to collect seeds on the Puente Hills Preserve for a planned mitigation restoration project implemented by Southern California Edison (SCE) that will be installed on land owned by SCE located directly adjacent to the Authority-managed former Unocal property in the Arroyo San Miguel area of the Preserve. This parcel is northeast of the Habitat Authority's current Olinda mitigation restoration site, as well as being located directly adjacent to the Authority's former Davies and Shuey properties. SCE's restoration project is mitigation for impacts to Coastal California Gnatcatcher resulting from its Mesa substation in the City of Monterey Park and will include installation of approximately 16 acres of coastal sage scrub habitat. The restored habitat will be protected by a conservation easement.

After consideration, staff believes that permitting S & S Seeds to collect native seeds from the Preserve for this adjacent project would provide a benefit to the Preserve and the habitats managed by ensuring genetic continuity of locally adapted plant species. The agreement with S & S Seeds would aid the Authority in maintaining its properties and protecting its natural resources.

The scope of work involves collecting specified seed quantities, of which the Habitat Authority can choose to receive either (a) 12.5% by weight of all seed collected, or (b) a

October 20, 2021

Agenda Item 8

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12.5% by weight credit against future seed purchases for each taxon collected as compensation. Additionally, S & S Seeds will store seeds collected for the Habitat Authority free of charge for up to two years. The list of species and seed quantities would be subject to review and approval by Habitat Authority staff prior to their collection, and a record of collection locations would be supplied by S & S Seed to the Habitat Authority. Seed collection practices would adhere to standard industry best practices to prevent overharvest. The agreement would be for the term of one year, with annual renewal subject to mutual agreement. This agreement with S & S Seeds may facilitate native seed collection on Preserve lands for other future mitigation restoration projects in the vicinity of the Preserve, subject to review and approval by the Executive Director on a case-by-case basis to ensure consistency with the Resource Management Plan. The agreement has been reviewed by the Authority's legal counsel.

S & S Seeds Inc. has been in business since 1975, has a 30,000 sq. ft. storage and shipping warehouse and has 1,000,000 lbs of seed in storage at any given time. They have been collecting seed on the Preserve since 2003. The Habitat Authority previously had a long-term seed collection contract with S & S Seeds from 2010 through 2017. Individual contracts with S & S Seeds have since been executed by the Habitat Authority and its restoration contractors for native seed collection services associated with mitigation restoration projects on the Preserve on a project-by-project basis.

Fiscal Impact:

There is no anticipated fiscal impact with this project if collected seeds are utilized within two years of their collection date (the no-cost storage term provided by S & S Seeds, per the agreement). Additional costs may be incurred if more than two years of seed storage is required.

## **Additional Materials**

Thank you letters were mailed to all of the below community supporters of the Authority's CalFire grant application. Attached is an example letter.

1. Assembly Member Lisa Calderon
2. Senator Bob Archuleta
3. Los Angeles County Supervisor Hahn's Office, 4<sup>th</sup> District
4. Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County
5. City of Whittier
6. Friends of the Whittier Hills
7. Hacienda Heights Improvement Association
8. Hills For Everyone
9. La Habra Heights Fire Watch, Inc./Fire Safe Council



September 22, 2021

The Honorable Lisa Calderon  
California State Assembly District 57  
State Capitol Building  
P. O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, California 94249-0057

**Appreciation for Support of CalFire California Climate Investments Fire Prevention Grant Application**

Dear Assemblymember Calderon:

Thank you very much for your support letter for the Puente Hills Fuels Reduction Project grant application to CalFire from the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (Habitat Authority). With your help and partnership, the Habitat Authority was successfully awarded this important grant of \$617,862!

This grant award comes at a crucial time for the Habitat Authority as it faces financial challenges. The award of this grant ensures that the Habitat Authority can continue to provide urban wildland fuel clearance, and conduct additional hazardous tree removals, as well as use goat grazing to help reduce the fuel load in the Puente Hills. These efforts will help keep the region safe.

Your letter of support bolstered this agency's application and is greatly appreciated.

With Gratitude,

Andrea Gullo  
Executive Director

C: Board of Directors and Advisory Committee



# **Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority**

Endowment Provided by the Puente Hills Landfill

Governor Gavin Newsom  
California State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

September 9, 2021

**SUBJECT: SB 266 (Newman) – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

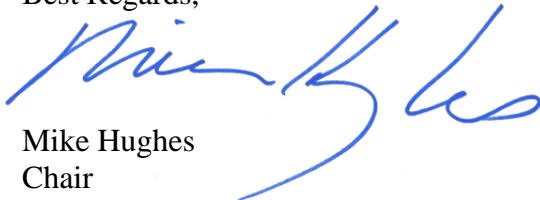
Dear Honorable Governor Gavin Newsom,

I am writing on behalf of the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (Habitat Authority) Board of Directors to express our support for SB 266. This bill begins to address a much-needed reboot of renewed land acquisition for California's State Park system and helps your goal of protecting 30% of lands and coastal waters by 2030. The Habitat Authority owns and or manages over 3,800 acres (the Puente Hills Preserve) which acts as a valuable resource for the greater region. This bill biologically strengthens the Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor that includes the Puente Hills Preserve and Chino Hills State Park.

The Habitat Authority is a joint powers authority established pursuant to California Government Code Section 6500 *et seq.* with a Board of Directors representing the City of Whittier, County of Los Angeles, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, and the Hacienda Heights Improvement Association. According to its mission, the Habitat Authority is dedicated to the acquisition, restoration, and management of open space in the Puente Hills for preservation of the land in perpetuity, with the primary purpose to protect the biological diversity. Additionally, the agency endeavors to provide opportunities for outdoor education and low-impact recreation.

Thank you and we urge you to sign SB 266.

Best Regards,



Mike Hughes  
Chair

C: Habitat Authority Board of Directors  
Habitat Authority Citizen Technical Advisory Committee  
Assembly Member Calderon  
Senator Archuleta



GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor  
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
**WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD**  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 944209  
Sacramento, California 94244-2090  
[www.wcb.ca.gov](http://www.wcb.ca.gov)  
(916) 445-8448

Mike Hughes  
Chair  
Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority  
7333 Greenleaf Avenue – First Floor  
Whittier, CA 90602

9/14/2021

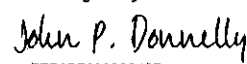
RAINBOW CANYON WILDLIFE CROSSING PLANNING  
RIVERSIDE COUNTY  
PROJECT ID: 2020156

Dear Mr. Hughes:

Thank you for your letter of support for the Rainbow Canyon Wildlife Crossing Planning project. The project was considered by the Wildlife Conservation Board on August 26, 2021. The Board allocated \$1,331,000 and approved the project as proposed.

Again, thank you for your support. This is indeed a great opportunity to work with our partners to enhance wildlife habitat in Riverside County.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
  
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John P. Donnelly  
Executive Director



# **Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority**

Endowment Provided by the Puente Hills Landfill

October 7, 2021

The Honorable City Council  
City of Whittier  
13230 Penn Street  
Whittier, CA 90602

## **Re: Comments on City-wide General Plan Update and associated DEIR**

Dear Mayor Vinatieri and Members of the Council:

The Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (Habitat Authority) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the City of Whittier's Draft General Plan Update and Housing Element (2021-2029) Update and associated Draft Environmental Impact Report (City documents). The Board of Directors for the Habitat Authority met on August 19, 2021 and submitted comments. The City provided responses, however the below comments are following up on the issues raised:

As you know, the Habitat Authority is a joint powers authority established pursuant to California Government Code Section 6500 *et seq.* with a Board of Directors consisting of the City of Whittier, County of Los Angeles, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, and the Hacienda Heights Improvement Association. According to its mission, the Habitat Authority is dedicated to the acquisition, restoration, and management of open space in the Puente Hills for preservation of the land in perpetuity, with the primary purpose to protect the biological diversity. Additionally, the agency endeavors to provide opportunities for outdoor education and low-impact recreation.

In the Puente Hills, the Habitat Authority manages the open space in its ownership as well as open spaced owned by the City of Whittier and Sanitation Districts, totaling over 3,880 acres, within the Cities of Whittier, La Habra Heights and the County unincorporated area known as Hacienda Heights. These lands are collectively referred to as the Puente Hills Preserve and comprehensively managed as one unit. The proposed City documents pertain to lands that are managed by the Habitat Authority through Agreements with the City of Whittier, A97-172 and A15-128.

Overall, we appreciate the partnership with the City of Whittier for the management of its open space. The following comments are provided again for your careful consideration:

Draft General Plan (version dated July 2021):

1. Figure LUCC-5 Sphere of Influence (p. 38) – Please remove the designation for residential development on Habitat Authority-owned property, Turnbull Canyon. This

property is managed as open space and was purchased with Los Angeles County voter-approved Proposition A funding which prohibits its development.

- The City's response (#16 in Attachment E, General Plan Responses to Comments Table) stated that the County has designated the land use as mentioned above. While that could have been an older land use designation, the County's current Land Use for Turnbull Canyon is Open Space-Conservation (OS-C), not residential per the following link on the Land Use Policy – General Plan 2035

layer: [https://rpgis.isd.lacounty.gov/Html5Viewer/index.html?viewer=GISNET\\_Public.GIS-NET\\_Public](https://rpgis.isd.lacounty.gov/Html5Viewer/index.html?viewer=GISNET_Public.GIS-NET_Public)

Please update the General Plan document by eliminating residential development land use in Turnbull Canyon.

2. Mobility and Infrastructure, Goal MI-6.2 (p. 97) – Please consider the following bolded and strikethrough modifications to this goal, ***“Collaborate with the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority to ~~Develop~~ a strategy to address parking near trailheads to address parking intrusion into adjacent residential neighborhoods. This strategy could include parking restrictions for non-residents, creation of trailhead lots, and provision of remote parking with shuttle service”***. Changes to parking facilities and access to the trailheads directly affects the management and sustainability of the Puente Hills Preserve. The Habitat Authority manages Puente Hills Preserve trailheads and associated parking lots pursuant to the agreement with the City and welcomes collaborative efforts with the City to address these important issues.

- The City's response (#25) to comments stated that the City's policies were designed to stay flexible to address a variety of locations and land management organizations. As such, we offer the following underlined edit to our original bolded and strikethrough modifications comment to Goal MI-6.2: ***“Collaborate with the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority or other applicable land management organization to ~~Develop~~ a strategy to address parking near trailheads to address parking intrusion into adjacent residential neighborhoods. This strategy could include parking restrictions for non-residents, creation of trailhead lots, and provision of remote parking with shuttle service”***.

We understand that the City has full discretion when planning for parking and transportation at it relates to its City-managed facilities and trailheads, such as Murphy Park and the Greenway Trail. However, when efforts are underway that address improvements, parking lots, and access issues relating to trailheads and open space managed by the Habitat Authority, coordination and approval are required as elements of the agreements, A97-172 and A15-128, with the Habitat Authority as these actions affect the management of the trails and natural resources.

Our overlapping goals for providing quality recreation, preserving natural resources, and avoiding or minimizing traffic to the surrounding community can be achieved when collaboration is ignited.

3. Table RM-2 Parks and Recreation Facilities (p. 140) – Arroyo Pescadero is managed by the Habitat Authority as a Natural Park which allows for passive recreation; please change the designation accordingly from its current designation in the draft General Plan as a Specialty Park which allows for active recreation.

- The City's response (#19) stated that since it is within the city park system the designation as a Specialty Park is appropriate. This response is not consistent with the manner in which the trailhead is managed which is the same as Hellman Park which is designated as a Natural Park. It also is not consistent with the Habitat Authority's adopted Resource Management Plan, or the intent of the acquisition of the open space and development of the trailhead. The City's agreements with the County, 58L1-97-0619 and 58L1-94-0034, allowed for the acquisition of the hills and development of the Arroyo Pescadero Trailhead using Proposition A funding. In summary, the purpose of this funding was for acquisition for development of trails, and acquisition to preserve and maintain significant ecological areas and the last remaining chaparral, oak woodland and coastal sage scrub ecosystems.

Active recreation, such as soccer fields would be an allowed use under the Specialty Park designation, and is not compatible with the abovementioned points, therefore we request that Arroyo Pescadero be designated as a Natural Park.

4. The Habitat Authority made two comments about home hardening pertaining to Goals and Policies: Wildfire, Goal 5, PSNH-5.9 (p. 176) and Implementation Plan: Program 22, Fire Hazards Severity Zones (p. 218) <https://www.readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/get-ready/hardening-your-home/>
  - The City's responses (#27 and #29) referred to the Fire Department's responses and compliance with state law. With the passage of AB 38 in 2019, state law has been chaptered that requires disclosures of low-cost retrofits to structures in high and very fire hazard severity areas (which includes parts of Whittier) when selling homes. The state has recognized the benefits of low-cost retrofits to "harden" homes in fire severity areas, however the phrase "home hardening" was not found in the City documents. Please ensure that proactive education and enforcement if any of home hardening is included in the General Plan or Implementation Plan documents where the City deems appropriate. Home hardening is a critical element in the overall plan to make communities safer.

Thank you for your consideration, and feel free to contact me, Ecologist Michelle Mariscal ([mmariscal@habitatauthority.org](mailto:mmariscal@habitatauthority.org)) or Executive Director Andrea Gullo at (562) 945-9003 or [agullo@habitatauthority.org](mailto:agullo@habitatauthority.org) for further discussion. Also, please maintain our agency on the contact list for this planning process.

Sincerely,



Mike Hughes  
Chair



Ivan Sulic  
Vice Chair

cc: Board of Directors  
Citizens Technical Advisory Committee  
Sonya Lui, Principal Planner, City of Whittier

# Development of park at former Puente Hills Landfill in motion after settlement

**LA County Sanitation Districts must pay the County \$80 million over next five years for development, maintenance and operation of the park.**



*On Oct. 31, 2013, the Puente Hills Landfill was shut down. The tall mountain of trash towering above the 60 Freeway was once the largest landfill in the nation, at one time was receiving 13,000 tons of trash per day or about 4 million tons a year — more than 40 percent of all the trash picked up and disposed in the county. (San Gabriel Valley Tribune/Staff Photo by Keith Durlinger)*

By [Robert Morales](#) | [rmorales@scng.com](mailto:rmorales@scng.com) | Press Telegram

PUBLISHED: October 13, 2021 at 6:10 p.m. | UPDATED: October 13, 2021 at 6:12 p.m.

Following a settlement worked out between Los Angeles County officials and the county's Sanitation Districts, the L.A. County Board of Supervisors has announced that the way has been paved for a regional park to be developed on the former Puente Hills Landfill.

"I am delighted that the sanitation districts are fulfilling their promise to the communities that have faced decades of impacts from the Puente Hills Landfill," Chair Hilda Solis said in a news release Wednesday. "While families in the San Gabriel Valley find beauty in the wilderness of the San Gabriel Mountains, many throughout the region don't have access to parks and open green space.

"To that end, I am proud to have led the original effort to create this 142-acre park resource for our community," Solis added. "Many thanks to all of the cities, community members and advocates that took a stand to support environmental justice and helped us get to this resolution."

The L.A. County Sanitation Districts in 1970 purchased more than 1,200 acres of land to create the landfill. The Sanitation Districts were required to provide portions of the site to the county for park development should the landfill close — which it did in 2013, as part of a 1986 Joint Powers Agreement.

After a dispute over financial responsibility for development, operation and maintenance of the park, Los Angeles County in March 2020 filed a \$283 million lawsuit against the Sanitation Districts, which in response filed a cross-complaint.

The settlement will require the Sanitation Districts to pay the county \$80 million over a five-year span, with \$38 million due in three months. It allows for the development, maintenance of operation of the park, which will have an initial project budget of \$600,000.

**CONTACT:**

Melanie Schlotterbeck, Cell: (714) 501-3133

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 9, 2021

## **Governor Newsom Signs Bill to Expand Popular Chino Hills State Park**

**Brea, California**—Reversing more than a decade of stagnation wherein the California State Park system did not grow, Governor Gavin Newsom changed course by signing a bill that will grow Chino Hills State Park, an urban wilderness park at the juncture of Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles Counties. Senate Bill 266, sponsored by Hills For Everyone, was signed into law on October 9<sup>th</sup>. The bill requires the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to accept the transfer of approximately 1,530 acres contiguous to Chino Hills State Park. This acreage expands the park by more than 10%.

SB 266 is the third attempt to get the bill through the Legislature. The bipartisan and bicameral effort was led by Senator Josh Newman (D-Fullerton) and Assemblymember Phillip Chen (R-Diamond Bar) along with their respective staffs, Hills For Everyone lobbyists at Tratten-Price Consulting, local cities and agencies, and 32 conservation groups across California. The bill had no documented opposition in the Senate or Assembly.

The acquisition of these critical lands, which protect important habitats and ridges, also builds on the east-west connection from the 14,107-acre State Park to the 4,000-acre Prado Basin,” states Claire Schlotterbeck, Executive Director of Hills For Everyone—founders of Chino Hills State Park. “We are grateful to our many partners including interim stewards, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) and transaction specialists at The Conservation Fund.”

Last year, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-82-20 which sets the goal of protecting 30% of California’s lands and coastal waters by 2030. An estimated eight million acres still need to be protected to reach that goal statewide and that must include acquisitions from DPR, the largest public land manager in the state. These new acquisitions set the Parks Department on a path of once again growing its system which hosts 77 million visitors a year and became even more fundamental to a healthy and recovering California during the pandemic.

“SB 266 will help California reach its goal of preserving 30 percent of the state’s land and coastal waters by 2030,” said Senator Josh Newman (D-Fullerton). “The expansion of Chino Hills State Park will protect precious open space for our beautiful area, an environment that hosts the most biodiversity in any of the lower 48 states.”

The 1999 General Plan for Chino Hills State Park documents lands prioritized for preservation, including the eastern ridgeline, which until recently had mostly been in private ownership. Without the eastern ridgelines under preserved status, the land could have been developed—destroying the viewshed for people and the water quality for wildlife. Since the mid-1970s, these lands were always envisioned for inclusion in the State Park.

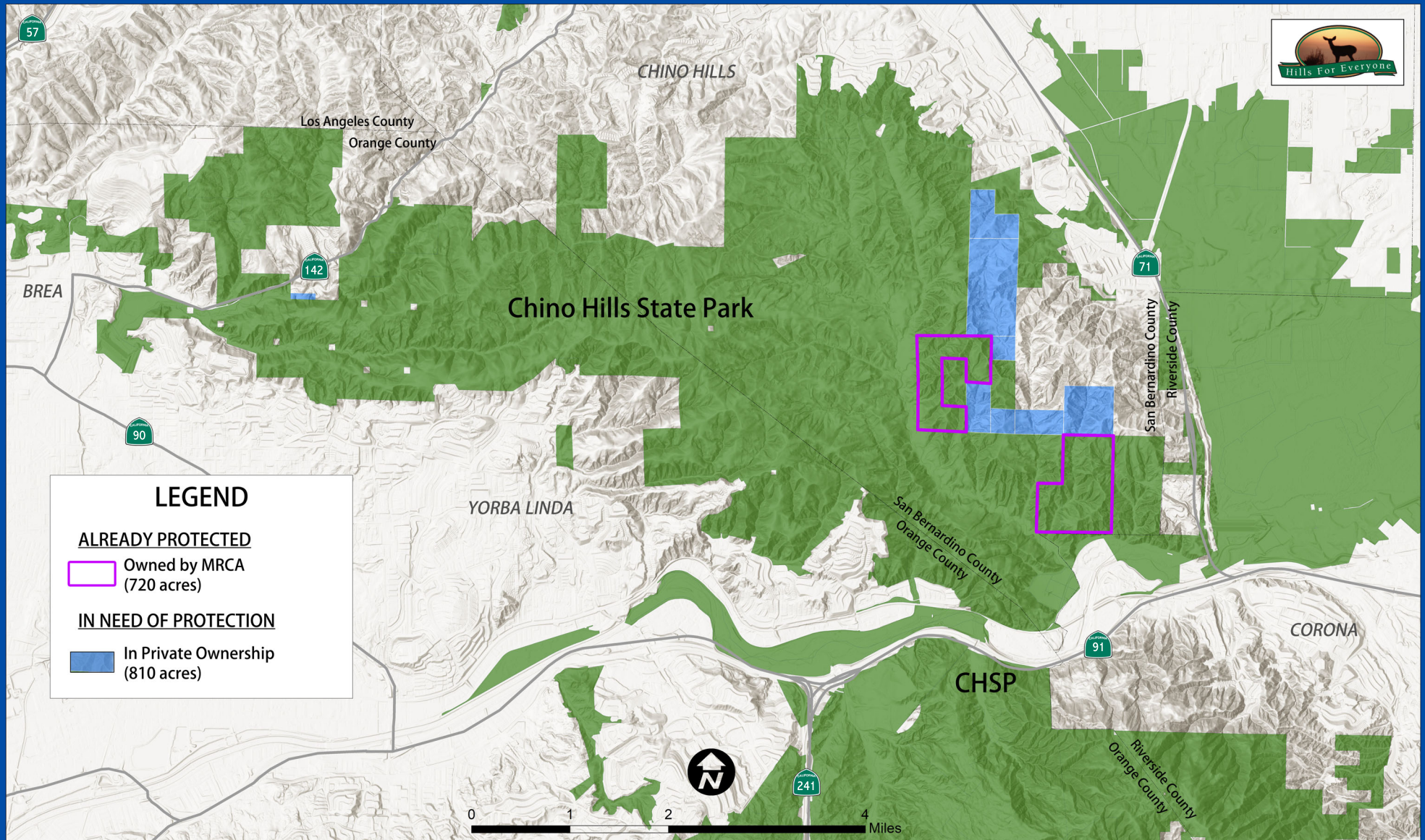
Additionally, State Parks will finally be in compliance with a settlement agreement it reached with Hills For Everyone and the Metropolitan Water District in 2008 to preserve walnut woodlands that were impacted when an access road to the District’s Diemer Water Treatment Plant was built through a portion of the Park.

Of the 1,530 acres included in the bill, 720 have already been protected and are now owned by MRCA. Currently, Hills For Everyone team members are working to finalize more transactions and secure funding. The overall strategy is to have the final two phases completed by 2024 and then added to the State Park. See the attached map for the progress to date.

###

*For more than 40 years, **Hills For Everyone** has worked to preserve the unique and disappearing landscapes of the Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor.*

# Natural Lands Included in SB 266 (the Chino Hills State Park Expansion Bill)



Data Provided by Department of Parks and Recreation; First American Title; OC Parks; and Orange County Transportation Authority.  
Map Last Updated September 2021

Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic  
Datum: North American 1983  
Scale: 1:60,000

## Rancho Palos Verdes won't bring shuttle back at popular hiking area

And the user rate for a new mobile parking app system has been less than 10%.



*The Rancho Palos Verdes City Council discussed parking issues around Del Cerro Park and the Portuguese Bend area as well as discontinuing a pilot shuttle service which began in April to help alleviate traffic. (photo by Michael Hixon)*

By [Michael Hixon](#) | [mhixon@scng.com](mailto:mhixon@scng.com) | The Beach Reporter

PUBLISHED: October 7, 2021 at 7:00 a.m. | UPDATED: October 8, 2021 at 2:02 p.m.

The past year's effort to reduce traffic and noise in neighborhoods around Del Cerro Park and the Portuguese Bend Reserve in Rancho Palos Verdes have been successful, officials say — but the pilot shuttle service will not return.

The City Council this week opted to end the shuttle service after initially suspending it in July because of a lack of riders.

Director of Recreation & Parks Cory Linder said the shuttle service, which was funded with \$20,000 for a three-month period through Proposition A funds, had 621 one-way trips from April until it was suspended July 4. The result was approximately \$32 per rider.

“We did see an increase in use at the Civic Center,” Linder said, but “it was not significant enough, and the program itself with the shuttle is proven to be costly.”

The city on Tuesday, Oct. 5, also discussed a mobile parking app it implemented to require advance reservations along Crenshaw Boulevard and Park Place.

After implementing that app, the popular hiking area has a user rate of less than 10%, officials say.

But it's unclear if the usage rate has declined due to the parking plan or is just a natural fall-off in demand for outdoor activities as coronavirus restrictions have been lifted. City officials, however, credited the plan.

And while traffic and noise issues have lessened in the area, some in the city are concerned the mobile app program might be costly.

Deputy Director of Recreation & Parks Daniel Trautner said from July 6 to Sept. 22, there's only been a 5% to 8% user rate at parking areas on Crenshaw and Park Place.

It costs \$110,000 a year for parking enforcement personnel and \$8,808 annually for ParkMobile services. Those recurring costs, along with more than \$24,000 for ParkMobile's initial costs, means the city needs a 25% reservation rate to break even, Trautner said.

"If we can get to a 25% reservation rate for those paid parking spots, combined with any potential revenue associated with those citations," Trautner said, "that would definitely help us cover those costs."

But currently most revenue is coming from citations.

Staff and park rangers have issued 288 citations at \$110, totaling \$31,680 as of Sept. 22. App reservation has so far netted \$2,903.

"I'm not a big fan of getting the majority of our revenue from citations," said Councilman David Bradley. "I think that's really bad public policy."

Bradley, in order to attract more visitors and give them more flexibility to help reach that 25% reservation rate, suggested ParkMobile offer one-hour time periods, not to exceed three hours, and to also allow same-day reservations.

City staff will work with ParkMobile to see if the one-hour reservations are feasible. If not, staff will return with the information to the City Council, possibly before the Dec. 21 meeting, according to city spokeswoman Megan Barnes.

Currently, reservations are available up to midnight the prior evening and are available for blocks up to 3 hours. There are 15 parking stalls available on Park Place adjacent to Del Cerro Park for Recreational Parking Permit holders, as well as two ADA stalls. On Crenshaw, there are 39 parking spaces that are free from 7 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. Monday through Friday. Charge per time block is \$10.35.

Trautner said they allowed users to make reservations without a fee in July. In August, usage was 20% to 30% lower after they started charging.

Senior Administrative Analyst Katie Lozano said the city saw parking double on Crenshaw, north of Crest Road, which does not require reservations and is free, since the mobile app went into effect.

“It appears a lot of people are choosing to walk a bit for the free parking,” Lozano said.

In September 2020, a temporary parking moratorium was placed on a 330-foot stretch of Crenshaw, where currently there are six spaces restricted just before Park Place. The moratorium was to expire on Oct. 19, but it was extended to the Dec. 21 meeting.

Even with a few glitches, which city officials said they hope to iron out, councilmembers were pleased with the parking plan.

“The goal is to reduce that overall impact to the neighbors,” Mayor Eric Alegria said, “and certainly that aspect of the goal, in my mind, has been achieved.”



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Press Release

Interior Department Ensures Migratory Bird Treaty Act Works for Birds and People

September 29, 2021

**Contact(s):**

Interior\_Press@ios.doi.gov ([mailto:Interior\\_Press@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov) )

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The Department of the Interior today announced a series of actions to ensure that the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) conserves birds today and into the future. Tomorrow in the *Federal Register*, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) will make public a final rule to revoke the January 7, 2021, regulation that limited the scope of the MBTA. In addition, the Service will simultaneously make public an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) announcing the intent to solicit public comments and information to help develop proposed regulations to authorize the incidental take of migratory birds.

“The Migratory Bird Treaty Act, one of our first environmental laws, represents more than 100 years of America’s commitment to protecting migratory birds and restoring declining bird populations,” said **Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland**. “The impacts of climate change coupled with loss and degradation of habitat are pushing more and more wildlife species to the brink. Today we are announcing critical steps to ensure that the Act can help conserve birds today and in the future.”

The January 7, 2021, final rule limiting the scope of the MBTA raised significant concerns from the public and international treaty partners and created numerous legal challenges. With this final and formal revocation of the January 7 rule, the Service returns to implementing the MBTA as prohibiting incidental take and applying enforcement discretion, consistent with judicial precedent and long-standing agency practice prior to 2017.

The Service will also issue a Director’s Order in coordination with the publication of the rules. The Director’s Order provides instruction to Service employees, including expectations for conducting Service activities and establishing criteria for the types of conduct that will be a priority for enforcement activities with respect to incidental take of migratory birds.

“Our next step will be to create a common-sense approach to regulating the incidental take of migratory birds that works to both conserve birds and provide regulatory certainty to industry and stakeholders,” said **Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks Shannon Estenoz**. “That’s why the Service is simultaneously publishing an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking announcing our intent to solicit public comments and information as we consider developing proposed regulations.”

Over the last 50 years, the population of North American birds has declined by an estimated 3 billion birds.

Many of the 1,093 species of birds protected under the MBTA are experiencing population decreases due to increased threats across the continent. Just recently, the Service released the *Birds of Conservation Concern 2021* report (<https://www.fws.gov/birds/management/managed-species/birds-of-conservation-concern.php>) with 269 bird species considered to be in greatest need of conservation attention.

Both natural and human-caused sources of bird mortality have contributed to the loss of bird populations. Many industries and projects have voluntarily implemented beneficial practices to avoid and minimize the take of migratory birds; however, bird populations remain in decline. The Service seeks to better protect migratory bird populations by addressing human-caused mortality with an incidental take regulation.

As part of the development of these regulations, the Service is also preparing a draft environmental impact statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. The agency will initiate a new public scoping process to engage in meaningful conversations with stakeholders, receive suggestions, identify significant issues, and share information on the scope of issues and alternatives to consider.

The Service will invite public comments and host virtual public scoping meetings for the general public, stakeholders, and Tribes following the publication in the *Federal Register*.

The final MBTA revocation rule will go into effect 60 days after it publishes in the *Federal Register* on October 4, 2021.

The ANPR will publish in the *Federal Register* on October 4, 2021, opening a 60-day public comment period. The notice will be available at <http://www.regulations.gov> (<http://www.regulations.gov/>), Docket Number: Docket No. FWS-HQ-MB-2021-0105 and will include details on how to submit your comments on to help guide the development of the proposed rule and draft environmental review.

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*The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov) (<https://www.fws.gov/>).*

*For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov/> (<https://www.fws.gov/>). Connect with our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/usfws>), follow our tweets (<https://twitter.com/usfws>), watch our YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/usfws>) and download photos from our Flickr page (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwshq/>).*

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Home Page (<https://www.fws.gov>) | Department of the Interior (<http://www.doi.gov/>) | USA.gov (<http://www.usa.gov/>) | About the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ([https://www.fws.gov/help/about\\_us.html](https://www.fws.gov/help/about_us.html)) | Accessibility (<https://www.fws.gov/help/accessibility.html>) | Privacy (<https://www.fws.gov/help/policies.html>) | Notices (<https://www.fws.gov/help/notices.html>) | Disclaimer (<https://www.fws.gov/help/disclaimer.html>) | FOIA (<https://www.fws.gov/irm/bpim/foia.html>)

# Map: 1 of every 8 acres in California has burned in 10 years, and here are the state's biggest fires

**The state's eight largest wildfires have all occurred since 2017, and the trend shows no signs of letting up**

By [Paul Rogers](#) and [Paiching Wei](#) | [pwei@bayareanewsgroup.com](mailto:pwei@bayareanewsgroup.com) |

PUBLISHED: September 29, 2021 at 8:40 a.m. | UPDATED: September 29, 2021 at 8:40 a.m.

If it seems like wildfires in California are getting larger, they are. Nine of the state's 10 largest wildfires since 1932, when modern records began, have occurred in the past decade. And amazingly, the eight largest have all burned since 2017.

Why?

"It's a combination of everything — climate change, decades of fire suppression and drought," said Craig Clements, director of San Jose State University's Fire Weather Lab.

Some fire experts call them "megafires," blazes larger than 100,000 acres that once were rare but are becoming increasingly common.

"I think this trend is going to continue," Clements said. "There's a lot of area that can still burn."

A century of fire suppression has left forests in many areas thick with brush and dead trees. When fires start, either from lightning, downed power lines or other causes, they burn much bigger and hotter than they historically would have because there haven't been regular fires to thin out the landscape.

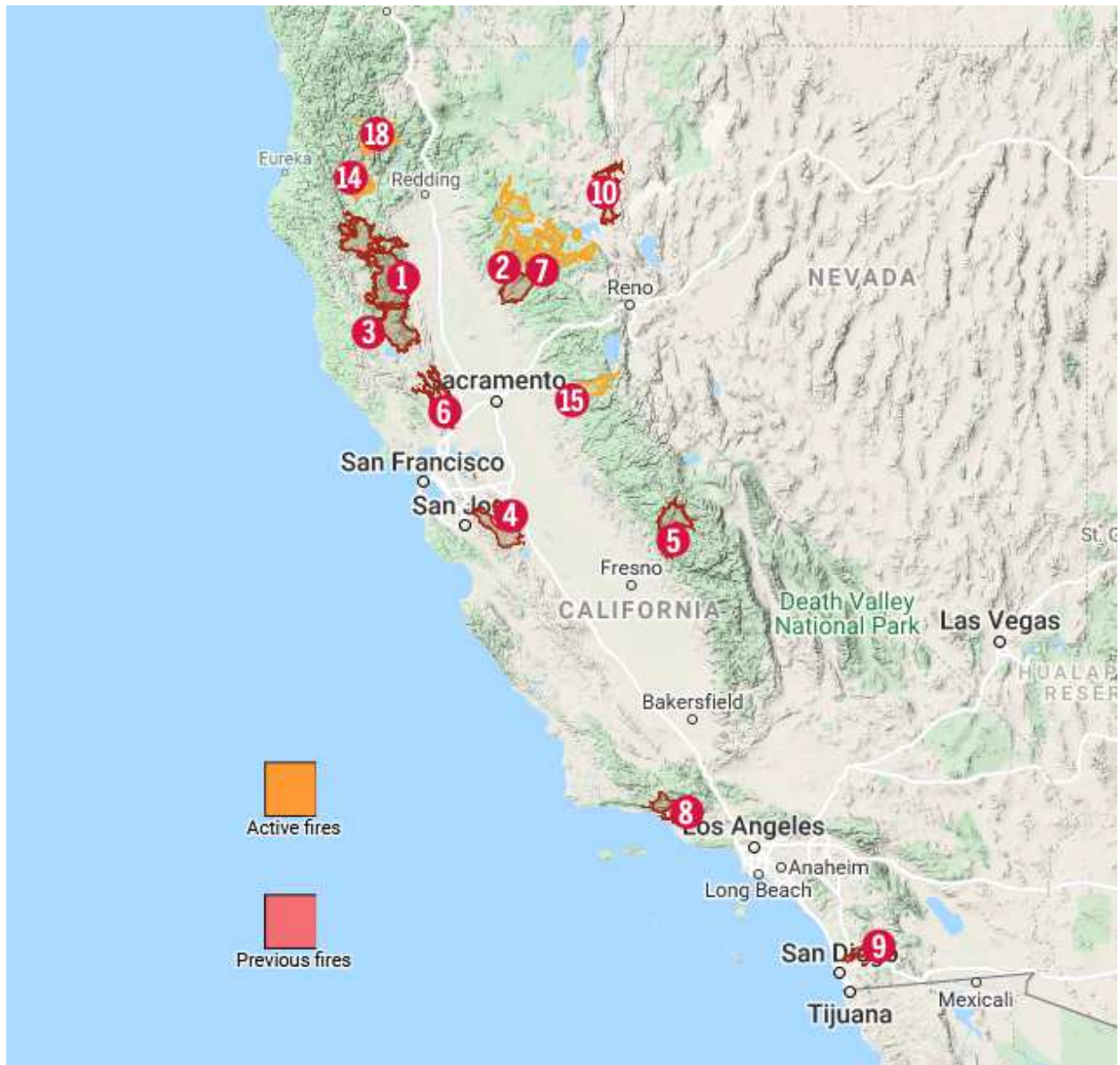
On top of that, California endured a severe drought from 2012 to 2016, and entered a new one last year. The past two years have been the driest in Northern California since 1976-77.

The lack of rain and snow has left vegetation dangerously dry. Add to that, climate change is causing hotter temperatures, particularly at night, a time when firefighters in the past could gain the upper hand. Hotter temperatures are melting snow and causing dry conditions — fire season — to last longer. Meanwhile, more people are moving into fire-prone areas, increasing the risk of ignitions.

Over the past 10 years, back to 2012, a total of 12.7 million acres has burned in California. That's 1 of every 8 acres in the state. And it's double the 6.4 million acres that burned in California during the previous decade.

Fires are often burning hotter, and with larger flame lengths. That's making them harder to put out.

"We are seeing such extreme conditions that a lot of the old tactics aren't working as effectively," said Clay Jordan, superintendent of Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park, at a community briefing Monday on the KNP Complex Fire, which has burned 48,000 acres in the park and is just 8% contained.



Another month or two of fire season remains in most of the state, including the Bay Area, before November rains are expected to reduce the risk.

The second-largest fire in state history, the Dixie Fire, began July 13 near Chico and is still burning. At more than 960,000 acres, it's three times the size of the city of Los Angeles and eight times the size of San Jose. The good news? That fire, which has destroyed 1,329 structures in Butte, Plumas, Shasta, Tehama and Lassen counties, on Tuesday was 94% contained.

Historically, October has been among the most dangerous months for wildfire in California. Vegetation is the driest, and winds blowing from the east toward the ocean — called Santa Ana winds in Southern California and Diablo Winds in Northern California — increase the spread of fire.

The solution? More prescribed burns during wetter months, and more mechanical thinning, said Clements. By some estimates, 20 million acres need to be treated, which will take years.

"I think it's the only solution," Clements said.

## LARGEST WILDFIRES IN CALIFORNIA

Wildfires in California are getting larger. Nine of the 10 largest wildfires statewide since 1932, when modern records began, have occurred in the past decade.

The Dixie Fire, which began July 13 near Chico, has become the second largest, with 963,309 acres burned as of Sept. 27 — an area three times the size of the city of Los Angeles. Other fires still burning — the Monument Fire, Caldor Fire and River Complex — are currently ranked the 14th, 15th and 18th largest respectively.

<div> <div>Active fire</div> <div>Size comparison: 1 square = San Francisco (30,016 acres)</div> </div>						
Rank	Fire	Acres burned	Year	Cause	Structures destroyed	Deaths
1	August Complex	1,032,648	2020	Under investigation	935	1
2	Dixie Fire	963,309	2021	Under investigation	1,329	1
3	Mendocino Complex	459,123	2018	Human related	246	1
4	SCU Complex	396,624	2020	Under investigation	222	0
5	Creek Fire	379,895	2020	Undetermined	856	0
6	LNU Lightning Complex	363,220	2020	Under investigation	1,491	6
7	North Complex	318,935	2020	Under investigation	935	1
8	Thomas Fire	281,893	2017	Power lines	1,063	2
9	Cedar Fire	273,246	2003	Human related	2,820	15
10	Rush Fire	271,911	2012	Lightning	0	0
14	Monument Fire	224,103	2021	Lightning	50	0
15	Caldor Fire	204,436	2021	Under investigation	1,003	1
18	River Complex	198,555	2021	Lightning	122	0

Note: Dixie Fire data as of Sept. 27. Monument Fire, Caldor Fire and River Complex as of Sept. 28.  
Source: Cal Fire

PAI/BAY AREA NEWS GROUP

Gov. Gavin Newsom's new state budget, [which he signed last week](#), has \$1.5 billion for wildfire prevention.

Much of that money is to expand forest-thinning, cut fuel breaks and conduct prescribed fire projects on state lands, along with grants to help private land owners and local governments reduce fire risk. There is also funding to increase the number of Cal Fire inspectors and pay for more wildfire research and detection technology.

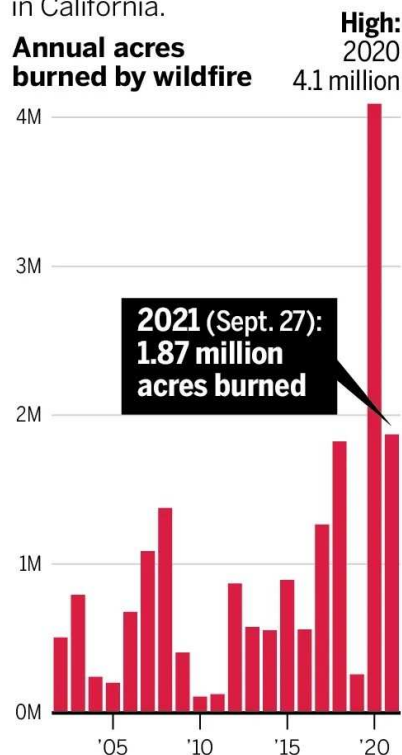
The federal government owns 57% of the forests in California, while the state owns 3% and private landowners own 40%. Newsom called on Congress to appropriate more money for forest thinning and prescribed fires in the West, and to take more action expanding renewable energy and addressing the causes of climate change.

A \$1 trillion infrastructure bill passed the U.S. Senate in August on a bipartisan 69-30 vote. It faces a key vote in the House this week. The bill has \$8 billion for wildfire risk reduction, forest thinning and restoration, and raises the pay of federal firefighters, who make as little as \$13 an hour.

"This is real," Newsom said, asking for more federal help, while he stood in Sequoia National Park as firefighters battled flames only a few miles away. "We need you to put down the swords, rhetorically and otherwise. Get the damn job done. Support the state, our nation, your national forests. Support your kids and grandkids. Protect lifestyles, memories, and places, communities."

## GETTING WORSE

Since 2002, fires have been burning more land annually in California.



Source: National Interagency Fire Center  
BAY AREA NEWS GROUP

## State fire prevention grants awarded for projects in L.A. and Orange counties

### More than a dozen groups to receive money from the nearly \$138M fund

*By City News Service (from page A3 of newspaper as printed)*

*September 14, 2021*

**LOSANGELES»** More than a half dozen five-, six and seven- figure state grants intended to reduce fire hazards and increase education about wildfire dangers are earmarked for entities in Los Angeles and Orange counties, it was announced Monday.

The monetary outlays, part of nearly \$138 million in funding for 105 local fire-safety projects across California, will enable public safety agencies to reduce the risk of wildfire through fuel reduction, emergency planning and fire prevention education, according to Cal Fire.

“This year, wildfires have once again been extremely severe and damaging, which only highlights our continued need to perform more community- based fire-prevention projects,” Cal Fire Chief Thomas Porter said. “Our wildfire and forest strategy includes funding these types of

fire-prevention projects to reduce the severity of wildfires and harden our communities.”

In April, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed SB 85, which provided \$536 million to accelerate forest health, fire prevention and climate resiliency. The allocation included \$123 million for Cal Fire’s Fire Prevention Grant Program, including \$50 million from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, with an additional \$73 million coming from the state general fund.

The Los Angeles nonprofit Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs, which was awarded \$4.8 million, is one of many organizations receiving funding for its work to create fire-adapted communities in Southern California while building workforce capacity to assist in that goal.

The Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority will use its \$617,862 grant to help maintain defensible spaces at the urban wildland interface, and reduce the fuel load with removal of dead and dying trees through goat grazing.

The San Gabriel Valley Conservation Corps and Service Corps was awarded \$611,597 for forest management that selectively removes invasive plants to reduce fire risk.

The Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains was awarded \$389,740 for a project designed to improve homeowner management of defensible space within the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

La Habra Heights will use its \$249,250 grant to remove large sources of fuel and creating more defensible firebreaks across the city. The primary goal of the program is to protect critical primary

evacuation routes by clearing hazardous fuel in close proximity to the city's most heavily trafficked roads.

The Santa Catalina Island Conservancy was awarded \$185,826 to reduce invasive plant species on the island such as fennel, flax-leaved broom and harding grass that increase the fuel load and intensity of wildfires. The goal is to reduce the prevalence of those species on roadways to protect egress and fire breaks.

The ArtCenter College of Design in Pasadena was awarded \$161,491 to create a visually compelling statewide campaign to raise awareness of the severe wildfire risks due to climate change and drought in California. The campaign will focus on digital forms of communication (email, social media, Web), building upon the large combined audiences of the American Red Cross and ArtCenter.

In Orange County, the city of Yorba Linda will use its \$866,610 grant to target sites that contain some of the heaviest stands of fine fuels and nonnative trees and are in close proximity to high-density residential neighborhoods, high-intensity power lines, water facilities and community facilities, including schools, parks and churches.

The city of Brea was awarded \$436,462 to reducing the risk of blazes in very high fire hazard severity zones through a variety of prevention and planning efforts, including code enforcement, homeowner education and assessment of more than 960 structures vulnerable to ignition, the vast majority residential.

The Orange County Fire Authority was awarded \$250,794 to purchase equipment to be used when completing fuels projects throughout the county, including grading fire access roads, thinning roadside vegetation and removing hazardous dead or dying foliage.

Other Southland recipients and their grant amounts:

- City of Sierra Madre, \$71,420;
- City of Hidden Hills, \$42,875;
- City of Malibu, \$65,000; and
- Los Angeles Emergency Preparedness Foundation, \$133,740.