

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
PUENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY  
Endowment Provided by the Puente Hills Landfill**

**This meeting will take place remotely in accordance with Government Code section 54953(e) *et seq.* (AB 361) and Resolution 21-04, adopted by the Board on November 22, 2021. 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/82884955754>** Meeting ID: 828 8495 5754

**- Or- Phone by joining at these numbers: +1 (669) 900 6833, +1 (253) 215 8782, Meeting ID: 828 8495 5754, Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kd8cd5ItIj>**

***Members of the public may provide electronic comments by 3pm on Wednesday, December 15, 2021 before the meeting 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 #1 of the meeting.***

Agency	Director	Alternate
County of Los Angeles	SULIC, Vice Chair	YOKOMIZO
City of Whittier	MARTINEZ	BOUCHOT
Hacienda Heights Improvement Association	HUGHES, Chair	LICARI
Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County	FERRANTE	BOEHMKE

The Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority is a public entity established pursuant to the Joint Exercise of Powers Act by agreement with the City of Whittier, County of Los Angeles, and Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts. Questions about any agenda items can be directed to Andrea Gullo, Executive Director, at 562.945.9003.

Pursuant to Section 54954 of the Government Code the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (Authority), a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Authority will be held at the call of the Chairperson of the Authority at the above time and place for the purpose of:

1. Receipt of Public Comments.
2. Report by Citizens Technical Advisory Committee.
3. Consent Calendar:
  - a. Approval of Authority Special Meeting Minutes of November 22, 2021.
  - b. Receive and file October 2021 Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) Ranger Report.
  - c. Receive and file the Authority’s Portfolio Earnings Reports and Custom by Instrument Type for November 2021 prepared by the County of Los Angeles Treasurer and Tax Collector.

- d. Receive and file Authority comment letter to the County of Los Angeles regarding their General Plan Update to the Safety Element.
  - e. Approval allowing all written resolutions attached to staff reports to be read by title only and waiving further reading.
  - f. Board adoption of Authority Resolution No. 2021-06 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 Subsequent Period of December 16, 2021, through January 15, 2021.
4. Discussion and possible action authorizing Executive Director to execute a non-bid contract with Sage Environmental Group for goat-grazing services in Turnbull Canyon in the amount of \$76,894. This project is funded by a grant from California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.
  5. Instruction to negotiators on property negotiations for Assessor Parcel Numbers 8239-045-902 and 8239-047-902. Negotiations for an access easement over the property. Negotiating parties include Board Chairman, Executive Director, and Coast Community College. (This item can be heard in closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8 regarding real estate negotiations.)
  6. Instruction to negotiators on property negotiations for Assessor Parcel Number 8240-036-021. Negotiations for an access easement over the property. Negotiating parties include Board Chairman, Executive Director, and International Buddhist Progress Society. (This item can be heard in closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8 regarding real estate negotiations.)
  7. Instruction to negotiators on property negotiations for Assessor Parcel Numbers 8266-002-901 and 8269-003-900. Negotiating parties include Board Chairman, Executive Director, and Rowland Water District. (This item can be heard in closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8 regarding real estate negotiations.)
  8. Board Members' statements, responses, questions or directions to staff, and Executive Director's comments.
  9. Adjournment and announcement of next meeting.

**NOTE:** Members of the public may address the Board of Directors on any item shown on the agenda.

NOTE: 72 hours prior to Board of Directors meetings, the entire Board of Directors agenda package is available for review, along with any meeting-related writings or documents provided to a majority of the Board members after distribution of the agenda package, at [www.HabitatAuthority.org](http://www.HabitatAuthority.org). In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, if you require a disability-related modification or accommodation to participate in this meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please call Melissa Miller at 562.945.9003 at least 48 hours prior to meeting.

**DRAFT Minutes of Special Meeting – November 22, 2021**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**PUENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY**

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Held via video conference and teleconference

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

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86318705059> Meeting ID: 863 1870 5059

**- Or- Phone by joining at these numbers:** +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose), +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston) Meeting ID: 863 1870 5059 Find your local number:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86318705059>

At approximately 3:00 p.m., the special meeting was called to order and a roll call was taken.

From Hacienda Heights Improvement Association:

Present: Mike Hughes, Chair

From Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County:

Present: Chuck Boehmke, Alternate Director

From City of Whittier:

Present: Jessica Martinez, Director

From County of Los Angeles

Present: Ivan Sulic, Vice Chair

Authority representatives present:

Andrea Gullo, Authority Executive Director

Michelle Mariscal, Authority Ecologist

Melissa Miller, Authority Board Secretary

Kenn Hughes, Deputy Chief Ranger, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA)

Elena Gerli, Esq., Aleshire & Wynder LLP, Authority Counsel

Cathy Houwen, Member of Authority's Citizens Technical Advisory Committee (CTAC) and CTAC's Liaison to Board of Directors

Others present:

Bob Henderson, former Authority Board Director

Brian Saeki, City Manager, City of Whittier

**DRAFT Minutes of Special Meeting – November 22, 2021**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**PUEENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY**

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**1. RECEIPT OF PUBLIC COMMENTS.**

Bob Henderson expressed his appreciation for the Authority Board's action to both rename a trail and establish a marker to commemorate his work to preserve the Preserve and to coordinate the community support necessary to accomplish that.

**2. REPORT BY CITIZENS TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.**

Regarding the November 16, 2021, Authority CTAC meeting, CTAC Member Houwen reported that:

- CTAC recommended to the Board of Directors that they approve the proposed funding needs of the agency; direct the Board subcommittee to pursue the exploration of funding fire prevention and safety, and natural resource management needs; and direct staff to prepare estimates for additional needs and submit for possible state funding, noting that the list in the staff report is not according to priority and that its item g. should be clarified to refer to restoration of native vegetation;
- CTAC recommended to the Board of Directors that they support the City of Whittier's implementation of the people-mover project to facilitate access to Hellman Park while it is closed to vehicles, while also providing to the Authority the ability to remove that access if the trails are closed due to weather, emergency, maintenance or a long-term environmental issue, as well as to promote ride-sharing, lessen fossil-fuel emissions, improve congestion at the trailhead(s), and increase access to outdoor recreation opportunities;
- CTAC recommended to the Board of Directors that they approve the non-bid contract with Nakae and Associates, Inc., for landscaping services in the amount of \$20,000 for the period of one year and authorize the Executive Director to execute this contract; and
- CTAC recommended to the Board of Directors that they approve the non-bid contract with Nakae and Associates, Inc., in the amount of \$41,179 and authorize the Executive Director to execute this contract.

**3. CONSENT CALENDAR:**

- a) Approval of Authority Special Meeting Minutes of October 20, 2021.
- b) Receive and file September 2021 and First Quarterly 2021-2022 Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) Ranger Reports.
- c) Receive and file the Authority's Portfolio Earnings Reports and Custom by Instrument Type for October 2021 prepared by the County of Los Angeles Treasurer and Tax Collector.
- d) Receive and file Receipts and Disbursements for the Authority for the quarter ending September 30, 2021, as submitted by the Los Angeles County Department of Auditor-Controller.
- e) Receive and file Authority letter of support for Caltrans' "SR-91 Wildlife Undercrossing Implementation Project" grant proposal.

**DRAFT Minutes of Special Meeting – November 22, 2021**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**PUEENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY**

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- f) Receive and file Authority rejection of tort claim filed with the Authority by Del Schoenhoeft, dated October 6, 2021 and received October 14, 2021.
- g) Approval allowing all written resolutions attached to staff reports to be read by title only and waiving further reading.
- h) Board adoption of Authority Resolution No. 2021-04 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 November 22, 2021, through December 22, 2021.

Alternate Director Boehmke motioned to approve and receive and file these items. Director Martinez seconded this motion, and in a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

**4. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING FUNDING NEEDS FOR THE AUTHORITY AS IT RELATES TO FUNDING FOR WILDFIRE PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF AGENCY PROPERTIES.**

Director Martinez asked if donations to the Authority are tax-deductible, and Executive Director Gullo replied in the affirmative. Chair Hughes stated that the Board’s subcommittee on this issue has been meeting regularly and has explored each possible solution to this funding deficiency.

Vice Chair Sulic motioned to approve the funding needs of the Authority; direct the Board subcommittee to pursue the exploration of funding fire prevention and safety, and natural resource management needs; and direct staff to prepare estimates for additional needs and submit for possible state funding. Alternate Director Boehmke seconded this motion, and in a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

**5. UPDATE, DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE DIRECTION REGARDING THE WHITTIER CITY PEOPLE MOVER PROJECT THAT MAY POTENTIALLY PROVIDE ACCESS SERVICES TO HELLMAN PARK TRAILHEAD.**

Executive Director Gullo reported that CTAC Members Shelley Andros and Ray Wong both attended the City of Whittier’s recent community meeting exploring the possibility of this project, to express support for the inclusion of the Authority’s Hellman Park Trailhead in the route of any such transportation system. The Board collectively expressed support for this project, and directed staff to continue to attend related stakeholder meetings.

**DRAFT Minutes of Special Meeting – November 22, 2021**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**PUEENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY**

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**6. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A NON-BID CONTRACT WITH NAKAE AND ASSOCIATES FOR LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE SERVICES IN AN AMOUNT OF \$20,000.**

Ecologist Mariscal noted that the cost amount of this new contract is identical to the cost of the previous year's contract for the same work.

Alternate Director Boehmke motioned to authorize the Executive Director to execute this non-bid contract with Nakae and Associates for landscape maintenance services in an amount of \$20,000. Director Martinez seconded this motion, and in a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

**7. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A NON-BID CONTRACT WITH NAKAE AND ASSOCIATES FOR NATIVE LANDSCAPING TO IMPLEMENT THE TURNBULL CANYON HABITAT ENHANCEMENT PROJECT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$41,179.**

Ecologist Mariscal added that the seed mix of this enhancement project will not include tree riparian species.

Director Martinez motioned authorize the Executive Director to execute this non-bid contract with Nakae and Associates for native landscaping to implement the Turnbull Canyon habitat enhancement project in the amount of \$41,179. Vice Chair Sulic seconded this motion, and in a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

**8. RECEIVE AND FILE AUTHORITY COMMENT LETTER TO THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES REGARDING THEIR GENERAL PLAN UPDATE TO THE SAFETY ELEMENT.**

Ecologist Mariscal provided an update. Executive Director Gullo reported that, after the meeting packet materials were published, a revised draft of this General Plan Update To The Safety Element was issued and therefore a new comment period is open until December 15, 2021. The Board received and filed this current comment letter, asked that a follow-up letter also be drafted to the County alerting them to the unexplained omission of a substantial area from the very-high-fire-safety-hazard zone contiguous to the Harbor Boulevard Wildlife Underpass, and suggested that staff also alert the Authority's various environmental partners about this substantial omission.

**9. UPDATE AND DISCUSSION REGARDING REDISTRICTING EFFORTS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS AS IT RELATES TO THE AUTHORITY.**

**DRAFT Minutes of Special Meeting – November 22, 2021**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**PUEENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY**

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Executive Director Gullo reported that, in the time since the meeting materials were published, the County's draft maps have all changed. She briefly reviewed these changes. Given the information presented, the Board collectively asked that staff send a letter to the County to communicate that the jurisdiction of the Authority should not be divided and should stay within the same supervisorial district.

**10. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION APPROVING AUTHORITY RESOLUTION 2021-05 ENTITLED ESTABLISHING THE SALARY, BENEFITS AND MANAGEMENT FOR EMPLOYEES WITH UPDATES INCLUDING COST OF LIVING INCREASES (THIS RESOLUTION TO BE READ BY TITLE ONLY, FURTHER READING BEING WAIVED), AND OTHER PERSONNEL MATTERS. THIS MATTER MAY BE HEARD IN CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54957.6.**

At 4:05 p.m. Chair Hughes moved to continue discussion of items 10, 11 and 12 in Closed Session.

In the closed session, item 10 was discussed by the Board and no reportable action was taken.

**11. INSTRUCTION TO NEGOTIATORS ON PROPERTY NEGOTIATIONS FOR ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBERS 8239-045-902 AND 8239-047-902. NEGOTIATIONS FOR AN ACCESS EASEMENT OVER THE PROPERTY. NEGOTIATING PARTIES INCLUDE BOARD CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AND COAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE. (This item can be heard in closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8 regarding real estate negotiations.)**

In the closed session, item 11 was discussed by the Board and no reportable action was taken.

**12. INSTRUCTION TO NEGOTIATORS ON PROPERTY NEGOTIATIONS FOR ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER 8240-036-021. NEGOTIATIONS FOR AN ACCESS EASEMENT OVER THE PROPERTY. NEGOTIATING PARTIES INCLUDE BOARD CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AND INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST PROGRESS SOCIETY. (This item can be heard in closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8 regarding real estate negotiations.)**

In the closed session, item 12 was discussed by the Board and no reportable action was taken.

At 4:18 p.m. Chair Hughes moved to end the Closed Session and the Open Session recommenced.

Vice Chair Sulic motioned to approve agenda item 10's Resolution 2021-05 and amend the budget as appropriate. Director Martinez seconded this motion, and in a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.
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**13. BOARD MEMBERS' STATEMENTS, RESPONSES, QUESTIONS OR DIRECTIONS TO STAFF, AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS.**

**DRAFT Minutes of Special Meeting – November 22, 2021**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
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Vice Chair Sulic asked if any holiday gathering is planned, and Executive Director Gullo replied that the current budget does not allow for that. Chair Hughes added that, in an abundance of caution due to the ongoing pandemic, it seems prudent to wait another year before considering holding another such gathering.

Executive Director Gullo thanked the Directors for their continuing support of the Authority and also thanked Counsel Gerli for her consistent expertise.

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

There being no further comments, or business to be discussed, Chair Hughes adjourned the meeting at 4:22 p.m.

*Approved:*

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*Mike Hughes, Board Chair*

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*Melissa Miller, Board Secretary*





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

October 31, 2021

**Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority  
Ranger Services Activities for October 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.
- Monitoring the Conservation Corp from Long Beach clearing the fire roads in Arroyo Pescadero and Arroyo San Miguel.
- Attended L.A. County Sheriff Pico station briefing. Shared information about the Habitat Authority and the rangers.
- Monitored the dead tree removal project in La Habra Heights.
- Attended the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (Habitat Authority) Board meeting and the Citizens Technical Advisory Committee meeting.
- Responded to a brush fire at Colima Road. It was a 15ft x 15ft fire at the Arroyo San Miguel gate.
- Responded to a brush fire on Colima Road. It was a 30ft x 50ft fire at Colima Road West of Casino Drive.
- Participated in our ranger monthly management meeting.
- Participated in the Hacienda Heights Improvement Association monthly meeting.
- Attended farewell lunch for Habitat Authority staff Lina Ochoa.
- Responded to Powder Canyon for stolen water pump from Nakae.
- Continue to monitor the contractors installing the Heli-hydrant at the Diaz Property in La Habra Heights.

- Picked up dumping including:
  - Household debris at Arroyo Pescadero.
  - Rugs at Powder Canyon.
  - Bricks and mirror on Fullerton Road.
- 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 October the following animals were observed.
  - Deer on Colima Road.
  - 2 Deer on Hacienda Road.
  - 1 Coyote on Colima Road.
- Continue to monitor the Harbor underpass. No activity to report.
- Responded to a dead deer stuck in the fence at Hellman Park.
- Assisted a dog owner with an overheated Husky at the Hacienda Hills Trailhead. The dog was stressed and dehydrated, but survived.
- Continue to pick up dog defecation at all the trailheads.
- Assisted Habitat Authority Ecologist install post on Quaker property for wildlife camera.
- Installed new signs at Sycamore Canyon that were damaged.
- Monitored a permitted filming at the Ford property.
- Discovered an illegal filming at Arroyo Pescadero. Turned out that they did get a permit through the City of Whittier for filming along Colima and the use of the parking lot. Notified Andrea Gullo.
- Searched for two lost hikers at Arroyo Pescadero. Found them in Arroyo San Miguel.
- Discovered a new encroachment on Skyline Drive. Working with the owner to resolve it.
- Assisted with home inspections at Sycamore Canyon and La Habra Heights.
- 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 October.

- Continue monitoring the surveillance cameras at various trailheads in attempt to catch the vehicle break-in perpetrators. We are also coordinating with Whittier Police and L.A. County Sheriff.
- Continue to contact the Los Angeles County Department of Street Maintenance regarding the graffiti along Turnbull Canyon Road.
- Removed a fallen branch in the fuel modification zone at Arroyo Pescadero.
- The Preserve was closed on October 26 due to rain.
- Dealt with various violations including:
  - In the Preserve after hours at Sycamore Canyon, Hacienda Hills, Powder Cyn., Hellman Park and Arroyo Pescadero.
  - Parking violations at Arroyo Pescadero, Hacienda Hills Trailhead, Sycamore Canyon and Ford property.
  - Loud music in the Hacienda Hills.
  - Smoking marijuana at Arroyo Pescadero.
  - Alcohol in Turnbull Canyon.
  - Warn and advise electric bikes in Powder Canyon and Hacienda Hills.
  - Dogs off leash in Turnbull Canyon.
  - Bikes in Arroyo Pescadero.
- Met with contractor for a bid to mow the Elderberry Trail. The bid was too high so the rangers mowed it.
- Received several calls during the month of October to our 24-hour ranger emergency services number including:
  - Hiker reporting a woman yelling at 5 children on the trail in Arroyo Pescadero.
  - Several calls regarding hikers locked inside the Preserve at the Hacienda Hills Trailhead.
  - Several calls regarding hikers locked inside the Preserve at Hellman Park.
  - Reporting suspicious vehicle at Arroyo Pescadero.
  - Reporting several people entering the Hacienda hills Trailhead after hours. It was the Sierra Hills Club.
  - Reporting an injured coyote on the Schabarum Trail.
  - Reporting the gate at the Hacienda Hills Trailhead had not been closed.
  - Reporting a dead deer on Hacienda Road.
  - Reporting a dead deer on the Ahwingna Trail.
  - Inquiring if the Preserve will be closed due to the rain.
  - Caller reporting that his house next to Hellman Park was broken into.
  - Call from Whittier Police for possible lost hiker at Arroyo Pescadero.

- 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.
- Worked with Andrea Gullo on the tractor specifications and bids.
- Removed the Covid mask requirement signs from the kiosks.
- The rangers were notified of a meeting regarding an organized electric bike ride in Hacienda Heights. Arrived at the meeting location and spoke with the participants, advised them of the Preserve rules.
- Continue to conduct perimeter patrols of all property for fence damage, illegal access points, rope swings, and encroachments.
- 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



**KEITH KNOX**  
TREASURER AND TAX COLLECTOR

## COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES TREASURER AND TAX COLLECTOR

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street, Room 462, Los Angeles, California 90012  
Telephone: (213) 974-2139 Fax: (213) 626-1701  
ttc.lacounty.gov and propertytax.lacounty.gov

Board of Supervisors  
**HILDA L. SOLIS**  
First District  
**HOLLY J. MITCHELL**  
Second District  
**SHEILA KUEHL**  
Third District  
**JANICE HAHN**  
Fourth District  
**KATHRYN BARGER**  
Fifth District

December 3, 2021

Ms. Andrea Gullo, Executive Director  
Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority  
7702 Washington Avenue, Suite C  
Whittier, California 90602

Email: [agullo@habitatauthority.org](mailto:agullo@habitatauthority.org)

Dear Ms. Gullo:

We have enclosed the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority Portfolio Income Reconciliation Report (Earnings Report), Custom Position Report, Purchase Detail Report, and Chronological Detail Report for the month ended November 30, 2021, for your review and reference.

Should you have questions, you may contact Ms. Jennifer Koai, Assistant Operations Chief, of my staff at (213) 974-7371, or [jkoai@ttc.lacounty.gov](mailto:jkoai@ttc.lacounty.gov).

Very truly yours,

**KEITH KNOX**  
Treasurer and Tax Collector

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Damia J. Johnson", is written over a horizontal line.

**Damia J. Johnson**  
Assistant Treasurer and Tax Collector

DJJ:JK az

Enclosures

INCOME RECONCILIATION REPORT



Run Date: 12/1/2021 4:13:02 PM

From Date: 11/1/2021 To Date: 11/30/2021

Inv No.	Security Description	CUSIP	Effect Rate	Stored Yield	Durat	Cur Par Value	Posted Int/Div	Beginning Prem/ (Disc)	Accretion Income	(Amortization) Expense	Scheduled Accruals	Gain (Loss)	Total Income
Fund: 4350 PHHPA-PH HABITAT PRESERVATION AU													
117243	FFCB 2.50 (C	3133EMW65	2.5000	2.5000	15.5230	22,675,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	47,239.58	0.00	47,239.58
Inv Type: 1040 FFCB Fxd-			2.5000	2.5000	15.5230	22,675,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	47,239.58	0.00	47,239.58
114424	FHLMC 2.00 (	3134GWS09	2.0000	2.0000	17.6470	9,500,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	15,833.33	0.00	15,833.33
Inv Type: 1500 FHLMC Fxd			2.0000	2.0000	17.6470	9,500,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	15,833.33	0.00	15,833.33
Subtotal			2.3524	2.3524	16.1501	32,175,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	63,072.91	0.00	63,072.91
Grand Total		Count 2				32,175,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	63,072.91	0.00	63,072.91



Custom Position Report

As Of Date: 11/30/2021

Run: 12/01/2021 04:16:02 PM

Reporting Currency: Local

LA County

Inv. No.	Description	CUSIP	Interest Rate	Maturity Date	Yield at Purchase	Par Value	Amortized Cost	Historical Cost	Accumulated Amort/Accr
Fund Grp: 4000 SPI-SPECIFIC PURPOSE INVSTMNT									
117243	FFCB 2.50 (CALLABLE)	3133EMW65	2.500000	07/29/2041	2.500000	22,675,000.00	22,675,000.00	22,675,000.00	0.00
Inv Type: 1040 FFCB Fxd-(S) 30/360						22,675,000.00	22,675,000.00	22,675,000.00	0.00
114424	FHLMC 2.00 (CALLABLE)	3134GWSD9	2.000000	08/27/2043	2.000000	9,500,000.00	9,500,000.00	9,500,000.00	0.00
Inv Type: 1500 FHLMC Fxd-(S) 30/360						9,500,000.00	9,500,000.00	9,500,000.00	0.00
Fund: 4350 PHHPA-PH HABITAT PRESERVATION AU						32,175,000.00	32,175,000.00	32,175,000.00	0.00
Subtotal						32,175,000.00	32,175,000.00	32,175,000.00	0.00
Grand Total	Count 2					32,175,000.00	32,175,000.00	32,175,000.00	0.00



Purchase Detail Report

From Date: 11/1/2021 To Date: 11/30/2021

Date Basis: Settlement

Run: 12/01/2021 04:09:22 PM

Reporting Currency: Local

LA County

Inv.	Description	Fund	Group	TXN	Bank	Broker	Settle	Maturity	Rate	Par	Principal	Purchase Interest
Grand Total		Count 0							.000			





Chronological Detail Report

From Date: 11/1/2021 To Date: 11/30/2021

Date Basis: Settlement

Run: 12/01/2021 04:17:55 PM

Reporting Currency: Local

LA County


Inv.	TXN	Description	Settle Date	Maturity	Rate	Yield	Par Value	Book Value	Interest	Amort / (Accret)	(Gain) / Loss	Settlement
Grand Total										0.00	0.00	

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

MEMORANDUM

**Date:** December 16, 2021

**To:** Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

  
**From:** Michelle Mariscal, Ecologist

**Subject:** Agenda Item No. 3d) Receive and file Authority comment letter to the County of Los Angeles regarding their General Plan Update to the Safety Element.

Recommendation:

That the Board receive and file.

Background:

The Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning is updating the County's General Plan Safety Element which was last updated in 2015. This update was necessitated by three state laws relating to addressing climate adaptation and resilience strategies, evaluating emergency evacuation routes, and identifying residential developments in hazard areas that have fewer than two emergency evacuation routes. The public review draft of the Safety Element Update was released on October 5, 2021 for a 30-day review period. As reported to the Board during its November meeting, staff submitted a letter on October 28<sup>th</sup> in support of specific proposed Fire Hazard Policies which would be modified or added to the updated Safety Element.

On November 15, the Department of Regional Planning released the draft public hearing version of the Safety Element Update which was presented to the Regional Planning Commission on December 15. The public comment period was November 15 to December 15. This version of the document included slight modifications to the Safety Element text, including changes to Fire Hazard Policy S 4.1 which had been the focus of comments submitted by Habitat Authority staff. Among other comments, which were adequately addressed with the current version, staff had recommended that the policy prohibit new subdivisions in, *and adjacent to*, Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ), however this language was not adopted. For comparison, the public review draft version is listed below along with the new public hearing draft version:

- Policy S 4.1 (public review draft): prohibit new subdivisions in Very High FHSZs unless located outside of the wildland urban interface, surrounded by existing development, and the level of service capacity of adjoining major

highways can accommodate evacuation. Discourage subdivisions in all other FHSZs;

- Policy S 4.1 (public hearing draft): Prohibit new subdivisions in Very High FHSZs unless entirely surrounded by existing built development, will connect to public infrastructure, and the level of service capacity of adjoining major highways can accommodate evacuation. Discourage subdivisions in all other FHSZs.

Staff's recommendation that Policy S 4.1 prohibit new subdivisions in, ***and adjacent to***, VHFHSZs was aimed at rectifying a conspicuous flaw in the current map of FHSZs, namely that a portion of the open space property located adjacent to, and southeast of, Habitat Authority property in La Habra Heights is not mapped as a Very High FHSZ despite being surrounded by land with that designation. For that reason, staff recommend that the County Fire Department be granted the ability to designate areas as Very High FHSZs when local conditions warrant, consistent with the California Government Code.

The attached letter from Chair Hughes was submitted because the deadline for submitting public comments, December 15, was prior to the next scheduled Board meeting and because the letter fit the following agency correspondence policy criteria adopted in July 2020:

The Executive Director with Chair approval, or the Chair, has the authority to send letters of support to public and private organizations on time-sensitive matters that prevents a letter from being approved beforehand by the full Board that support the mission of the Authority without having a draft approved by all Authority Directors. These letters should be consistent with the mission of the Authority and include, but are not limited to, comments on developments, policies or legislation that could affect the Authority. The letters will be provided to the Board at the subsequent Board meeting.



December 8, 2021

Laura Shell, Chair  
Planning Commission  
Los Angeles County  
320 W Temple St  
Los Angeles CA 90012  
[comment@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:comment@planning.lacounty.gov)  
[climate@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:climate@planning.lacounty.gov)

**RE: Project No. PRJ2021-002039 / Safety Element Update and Amendment to Land Use Element, December 15, 2021**

Dear Chair Shell and Members of the Commission:

The Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (Habitat Authority) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Safety Element Update.

The Habitat Authority is a public 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 community of Hacienda Heights. 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 of Board Member agencies, 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 (Preserve). The Preserve and surrounding communities are almost entirely designated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) within the respective State and Local Responsibility Areas. Additionally, the boundaries of the Preserve are almost entirely surrounded by development and therefore at the wildland urban interface which poses challenges for reducing wildfire risk due to increased ignition opportunity. A substantial portion of the Habitat Authority's annual operating budget goes towards brush clearance and fuel abatement at the wildland urban interface to create defensible space for our neighbors. For these reasons, the Habitat Authority expresses its support for prohibiting future subdivisions within Very High FHSZ, as defined in Fire Hazard Policy S 4.1.

The Habitat Authority thanks and acknowledges the Department of Regional Planning for incorporating some of its comments, submitted October 28, 2021, on the Draft Safety Element Update. Those comments included defining the limits of the Wildland Urban Interface in Policy S 4.1 (the Wildland Urban Interface criteria has since been removed from the current draft) and clarifying how “surrounded” by existing development a proposed subdivision site within a Very High FHSZ would need to be in order for the development prohibitions to be lifted (now clarified as “entirely surrounded”). However, a certain comment was not addressed in the current Draft Safety Element Update and is included below for reference, along with additional comments.

In its letter dated October 28, 2021, the Habitat Authority recommended the following modifications (in bold italics) to Policy S 4.1:

Policy S 4.1 (public review draft version, dated 10-5-21): Prohibit new subdivisions in ***or adjacent to*** Very High FHSZs unless located outside of the wildland urban interface, surrounded by existing development, and the level of service capacity of adjoining major highways can accommodate evacuation. Discourage subdivisions in all other FHSZs.

The Habitat Authority’s recommendation that Policy S 4.1 prohibit new subdivisions in, ***and adjacent to***, Very High FHSZs was aimed at rectifying a conspicuous flaw in the current map of FHSZs, namely that a portion of open space property in unincorporated Los Angeles County area located adjacent to, and southeast of, Habitat Authority property is not mapped as a Very High FHSZ despite being surrounded by open space with that designation. For that reason, the Habitat Authority is concerned that the current proposed policy language (public hearing draft version, dated 11-10-21) may present a loophole that could allow development to occur on that parcel resulting in additional fire hazards at the wildland urban interface with the potential to spread to nearby open space properties and residential neighborhoods. This is just one example of a FHSZ mapping inaccuracy that the Habitat Authority is aware of; other similar mapping inaccuracies may exist elsewhere. The Habitat Authority recognizes that its original proposed language to Policy S 4.1 may have been too vague for consideration, and therefore requests that the Safety Element Update includes language that would allow the Los Angeles County Fire Department the ability to impose stricter development prohibitions and identify additional areas as Very High FHSZs on a case-by-case basis. This would allow the County Fire Department to review and analyze outdated or inaccurate mapping to address local needs. This would be pursuant to the following California Government Code Chapter 6.8. Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones [51175 - 51189]:

- *Section 51175:*  
*(c) It is not the intent of the Legislature in enacting this chapter to limit or restrict the authority of a local agency to impose more restrictive fire and public safety requirements, as otherwise authorized by law.*
- *Section 51179:*  
*(b) A local agency may, at its discretion, include areas within the jurisdiction of the local agency, not identified as very high fire hazard severity zones by the director, as very high fire hazard severity zones following a finding supported by substantial evidence in the record that the requirements of Section 51182 are necessary for effective fire protection within the area.*

Further, it is the Habitat Authority's understanding that Cal Fire is in the process of updating its FHSZ maps. As suggested, enabling the County Fire Department to impose restrictions based on their knowledge of specific site conditions would be beneficial in instances where current maps are outdated or inaccurate.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Hughes", is positioned above the printed name.

Mike Hughes  
Chair


cc: Habitat Authority Board of Directors and Advisory Committee

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

MEMORANDUM

**Date:** December 16, 2021

**To:** Board Members

**From:**   
Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

**Subject:** Agenda Item No. 3f) Board adoption of Authority Resolution No. 2021-06 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 Subsequent Period of December 16, 2021, through January 15, 2021.

Recommendation:

That the Board adopt the attached resolution, 2021-06.

Background:

The attached resolution is provided for your consideration to be in compliance with Assembly Bill 361 which was signed into law on September 16, 2021 and made effective on October 1, 2021. AB 361 allows 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.

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.

It has not been longer than 30 days from the adoption of the Authority's 2021-04 resolution which was approved at the last Board meeting, so the attached is a subsequent resolution as drafted by Authority attorneys extending the timeframe for virtual meetings through January 15, 2022.

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-06

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE PUENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY PROCLAIMING A LOCAL EMERGENCY PERSISTS AND RE-AUTHORIZING THE USE OF REMOTE TELECONFERENCE MEETING PROCEDURES BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ALL STANDING COMMITTEES FOR THE PERIOD DECEMBER 16, 2021 THROUGH JANUARY 15, 2022, AS AUTHORIZED BY GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54953(E) *ET SEQ.*

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 the meeting is held during a state of emergency that has been declared 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, which includes area within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Authority, 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 previously adopted Resolution No. 2021-04 on November 22, 2021, finding that the requisite conditions exist for the Board and all standing committees of the



Authority to conduct remote teleconference meetings without compliance with Government Code section 54953(b)(3), as authorized by Government Code section 54953(e) *et seq.*; and

WHEREAS, as a condition of extending the use of the remote teleconference meeting procedures provided in Government Code section 54953(e), the Board must reconsider the circumstances of the state of emergency, and as of the date of this Resolution, the Board has done so; and

WHEREAS, a state of emergency persists, as initially identified and described by the Governor in the proclamation of 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) issued on March 4, 2020, pursuant to Government Code section 8625; and

WHEREAS, State of California and Los Angeles County Department of Public Health officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing, as reflected by (without limitation) current State and County Public Health Officer Orders and related orders and guidance; and

WHEREAS, the Board hereby finds that the emergency conditions persist 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 reaffirms, reauthorizes, and continues the existence of a local emergency and ratifies state and local orders for social distancing; and

WHEREAS, the Board hereby finds that, as a consequence of the local emergency persisting and the imposed or recommended social distancing measures, the Board and 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, 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 reconsiders the conditions of the state of emergency as proclaimed by the Governor, the existence of emergency conditions in the Authority, and reaffirms, reauthorizes, and continues the existence of a local emergency throughout the Authority.

Section 3. The Board finds that holding the meetings of the Board and standing committees of the Authority in person continues to 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 4. Further, the Board finds that the State of California and Los Angeles County Department of Public Health officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing; and

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, continuing to conduct open and public meetings remotely 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) January 15, 2022, 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 standing committees of the Authority may continue to meet remotely, without compliance with Government Code section 54953(b)(3), but otherwise as permitted by Government Code section 54953(e) *et seq.*

Section 7. Should any provision, section, paragraph, sentence or word of this Resolution be rendered or declared invalid by any final court action in a court of competent jurisdiction or by reason of any preemptive legislation, the remaining provisions, sections, paragraphs, sentences or words of this Resolution as hereby adopted shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 8. The Board Secretary shall certify to the adoption of this Resolution and enter it into the book of original Resolutions.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** at the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority duly held on 16th day of December, 2021, by the following vote:

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

**WITNESS** my hand of said Authority this 16th day of December, 2021.

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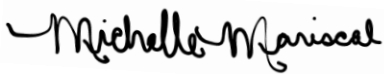
Melissa Miller, Secretary

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

MEMORANDUM

**Date:** December 16, 2021

**To:** Andrea Gullo, Executive Director



**From:** Michelle Mariscal, Ecologist

**Subject:** Agenda Item No. 4) Discussion and possible action authorizing Executive Director to execute a non-bid contract with Sage Environmental Group for goat grazing services in Turnbull Canyon in the amount of \$76,894. This project is funded by a grant from California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Recommendation:

That the Board authorize Executive Director to execute a non-bid contract in the amount of \$76,894 with Sage Environmental Group.

Background:

During the current fiscal year, the Habitat Authority was awarded a \$617,862 grant from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Fire Prevention Grants Program to fund activities with the goal to reduce the wildfire fuel load in the Puente Hills Preserve which included \$77,000 for goat grazing. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act and has been filed with the County of Los Angeles and the state of California.

Staff have identified 36-acres in the southern portion of Turnbull Canyon with an accumulation of dead thatch material and predominantly non-native weed cover that would be suitable for goat grazing to reduce wildfire fuel load. Given this area's proximity to Turnbull Canyon Road and recreational trails, it has a history of being wildfire prone and several fires have occurred here over the past few decades. The map on page 3 of the attached proposal identifies the proposed grazing sites, which are located along emergency access roads (Elderberry Trail and Workman Ridge Trail). The proposed grazing project was reviewed for compliance with the Significant Ecological Areas Program by County of Los Angeles staff in May 2021.

Sage Environmental Group, established in 2007, is an environmental consulting limited liability company that, in part, offers goat grazing for wildland management. They have successfully provided wildland goat grazing services at the least to the Irvine Ranch Conservancy and the Center for Lands Management. Staff met with Sage Environmental Group (Sage) onsite in November 2020 to develop a scope of work and preliminary cost estimate (used to develop the grant application budget). Also, staff involved the rangers in planning for the project. The scope

of work was subsequently refined to 36 acres which would be grazed by a herd of 100-200 goats that would be mobilized for approximately 120 days during winter/spring in fiscal year 2021-22. The sites would be grazed a second time during winter/spring of fiscal year 2022-23. The goats would be contained within a solar-powered electrified fence and accompanied at all times by at least one pair of livestock guardian dogs for protection. The Habitat Authority ecologist will be in close contact with Sage staff during the grazing activities to determine the intensity of grazing across the sites; although non-native weeds are the predominant vegetation, the goats will be excluded from any areas that are deemed ecologically sensitive and will not be allowed to intensively graze intact native vegetation. For additional details, attached is the proposal by Sage Environmental Group in the amount of \$76,894. The contract amount includes a 10% contingency to cover unforeseen costs or circumstances.

Although not required for the goal of this project, a potential future element that could follow the second year of grazing is native habitat restoration. It would involve seeding a small portion of the sites with a locally sourced native seed mix, possibly provided by S&S Seeds at no cost per their current seed collection agreement with the Habitat Authority. Installation could be funded through the agency's typical annual General Landscape Maintenance contract if approved for that fiscal year. The site would be irrigated via rainfall. Treating a larger area for restoration could result in additional costs.

According to Section 3 of the Authority's Purchasing Policies, the Board can authorize non-bid contracts for services if, in part, prior experience and/or professional qualifications have proven that a particular service is more satisfactory or economical for Authority purposes. Sage Environmental Group is recommended as a non-bid contract because the proposed contractor is known to possess the needed experience and professional qualifications that are more satisfactory and economical for Authority purposes. Additionally, they have specific experience locally and are uniquely familiar with the topography and have experience conducting goat grazing and habitat enhancement in and adjacent to sensitive habitats on other open space preserves. Furthermore, they will directly oversee the grazing work conserving limited Authority staff resources. In accordance with the Authority's Purchasing Policies, contracts over \$10,000 need Board approval.

#### Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact other than the cost of potable water to supply the goat herd. The work will be funded by the Authority Grant Agreement with CAL FIRE (5GG20144).

Beyond the grant goal, if a small portion of the site is hand seeded with a native seed mix after the goat grazing is completed, the work could be funded under the General Landscape Maintenance contract during the fiscal year that the seeding work would occur resulting in no additional fiscal impact beyond of the typical annual operating budget.

## Item 4. Exhibit



December 7, 2021  
VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMITTAL  
mmariscal@habitatauthority.org

Michelle Mariscal, M.S., Ecologist  
Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority  
7702 Washington Avenue, Suite C  
Whittier, CA. 90602

Subject: Year 2022 and Year 2023 Goat Grazing for Weed Abatement and Fire Fuel Load Reduction  
on ~36 acres at Altmark and Elderberry Sites within the Puente Hills Habitat Preserve

Dear Ms. Mariscal:

Sage Environmental Group (Sage), a licensed C-27 Landscape Contractor headquartered in Orange County, is pleased to submit its bid pricing and qualifications to the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (Authority) for the above-referenced project. We have reviewed the maps provided and information shared during our phone calls, emails and site visit. The two proposed sites would be excellent for annual goat grazing to meet the long-term management goals for weed abatement and fire fuel load reduction. Goat grazing is an excellent fuel load control and habitat restoration site preparation tool.

The Project is located at two sites: Altmark (27.2 acres) and Elderberry (8.5 acres) on preservation lands. The weed removal areas currently contain predominantly invasive mustard and non-native grasses with scattered patches of trees and brush.

We have recently completed grazing for habitat restoration on a purple needlegrass sites managed by the Irvine Ranch Conservancy. The grazing assisted in achieving Resource Agency sign-off for the site the following year. This year, we completed a habitat site preparation for a coastal sage scrub site managed by the Center for Natural Lands Management on very steep hillsides located above Mission San Juan Capistrano. This site is scheduled for hydroseeding this winter.

**Goat Grazing:** Sage will supply and manage approximately 100 (minimum) to 200 (maximum) head of goats (Boer and Spanish breed) for grazing at the designated areas. Along with the goats, one or two pair of livestock guardian dogs will be used to protect the goats. Sage will supply all other equipment and support personnel to graze the subject sites. We understand Sage will conduct all required site preparation to consist of removal of weeds toxic to goats and provision of potable water to the site(s) utilizing the Arroyo Pescadero staging area potable water source.

The optimal grazing schedule is between January and September annually. Mobilization, grazing and teardown would be for the duration of ~120 days annually. Mobilization can be accomplished within a few days for each site, which consists of setting portable fencing, setting up and stocking a temporary pen to contain the goats at night (supplemental food, water, and sanitary bedding), and delivering the goats to the sites. We envision a separate mobilization at each of the five sites.

Assumptions: The Authority will provide a nearby clean potable water point of connection, realistic points for site access for crew access to install/tear down low-impediment mesh fencing; and realistic trailer access point to load/unload animals (gooseneck). We understand that all sites have roads nearby with large turn-arounds plus ample parking.

To prevent overgrazing, particularly in areas containing native or mixed native vegetation, Sage staff will coordinate with the Authority to identify important resources that should be avoided or where grazing should be minimized. These areas generally include riparian, coastal sage scrub, native grasslands, and native tree areas. The light graze or avoidance areas are managed to ensure resource protection.

All work with animals will be carried out in accordance with the California Department of Food and Agriculture best practices, and any city-required animal permits. All animals will be maintained in good health and be supervised by qualified, experienced staff under the direction of our veterinarian.

Sage will complete any additional mechanical mowing, tree and shrub limb cutting, weed whacking and debris removal requested to complete the weed abatement and fire fuel load reduction at these locations as part of this contract. Overseeding with native seed can also be dispensed via animal near the end of the grazing effort, should seed be provided.

Alissa Cope will serve as the primary contact on this contract. Carson Helton will serve as the emergency contact and provide all oversight and management of field operations.

The 2022 cost estimate for annual treatment of ~36 acres is \$43,120 as follows: \$ 950 per acre, plus \$2,500 mobilization/teardown fees each for the two sites. Final mobilization/teardown fees will be confirmed prior to grazing setup and contract negotiation. We suggest a 10% contingency.

The 2023 cost estimate for annual treatment of ~36 acres is \$33,774 as follows: \$ 714 per acre, plus \$2,500 mobilization/teardown fees each for the two sites. Final mobilization/teardown fees will be confirmed prior to grazing setup and contract negotiation. We suggest a 10% contingency.

Our suggested TOTAL budget estimate for tow years of annual grazing , including contingency, is \$ 76, 894.

Please feel free to contact us directly with any questions. Thank you again for considering grazing in your long-term management toolbox.

Respectfully,

SAGE ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP



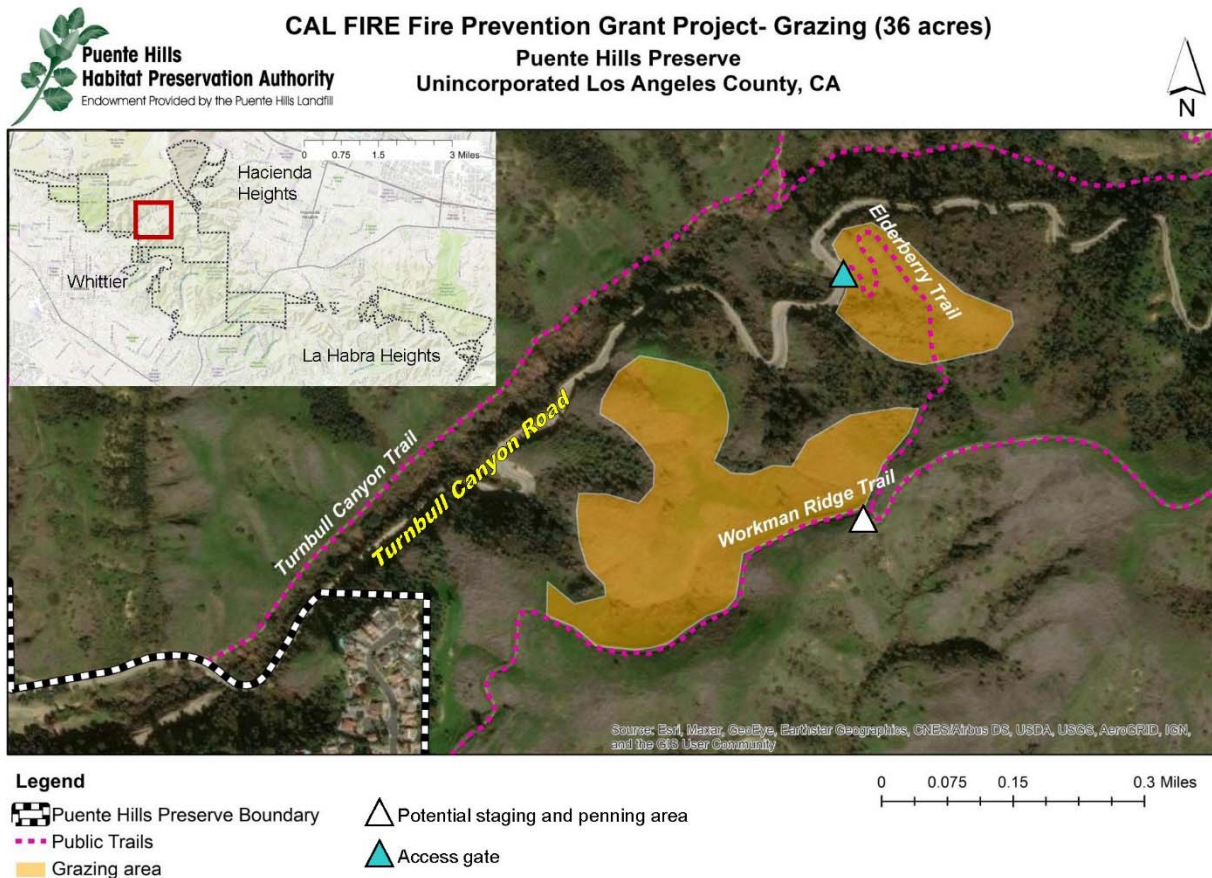
Alissa Cope  
Principal  
24040 Camino del Avion, #A77  
Monarch Beach, CA 92629  
(949) 243-2282 cell  
acope@sageenvironmentalgroup.com



Carson Helton  
Director of Habitat Restoration  
24040 Camino del Avion, #A77  
Monarch Beach, CA 92629  
(949) 444-9014 cell  
chelton@sageenvironmentalgroup.com

## Grazing Areas

Work will be conducted in the areas indicated on the map below as provided by the Authority.



## Licenses and Registrations

California State License Board

Landscape Contractor License (C-27) #947034 exp 10-31-2021

<https://www.cslb.ca.gov/OnlineServices/CheckLicense/LicenseDetail.aspx?LicNum=947034>

California Department of Industrial Relations

Registration #1000045073 exp 6-30-21

<https://cadir.secure.force.com/ContractorSearch?inputSearch=1000045073>

County of Los Angeles Department of Agriculture/CAL FIRE

Roster of qualified grazers

## Insurance

Sage carries the required levels of insurance for goat grazing and landscape contracting activities. Upon award, Sage will submit a Certificate of Insurance that names the Authority as Additional Insured.



## Grazing Equipment

The motorized equipment that supports our grazing activities consists of one large herd trailer, one recreational vehicle, several pickup trucks and an ATV. All equipment hauling and working on-site will be identified by our company logo and will be the same color.



## Guardian Animals

Along with the goats, one or two pair of livestock guardian dogs will be used to protect the goats. These are: one pair of Pyrenees dogs and one pair of Komondor dogs. All dogs follow the goats in the grazing areas during daylight areas then remain outside of the overnight pen in order to guard against predators (coyotes, bob cats, etc.) and humans (homeless, unauthorized visitors, etc.)



*Sage Pyrenees and Komondor guard dogs at fire fuel load reduction and habitat restoration grazing sites*

## Communication

All proposed personnel are fluent in English. They can communicate effectively in written and oral English. Project managers, supervisors, field directors and labor crew/handlers all have cell phones that can send and receive voice calls, save voice mail messages, and send and receive text messages.

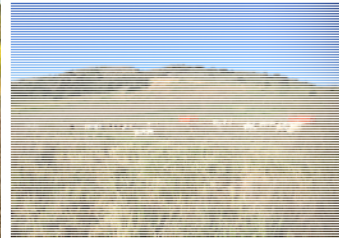
## Mobilization/Operations/Demobilization

Sage will coordinate with the Authority to establish logical points of ingress/egress, staging and holding pen locations, as well as potable water points of connection. A holding pen, portable shade, nighttime security lighting, several 100-gallon water troughs, supplemental feed for protein, and setting of electrified wire mesh grazing limits with solar powered charging are all part of mobilization. A small motor home and generator owned by Sage may also be utilized for the handler.



*Overnight pens and water resources are set up on the site*

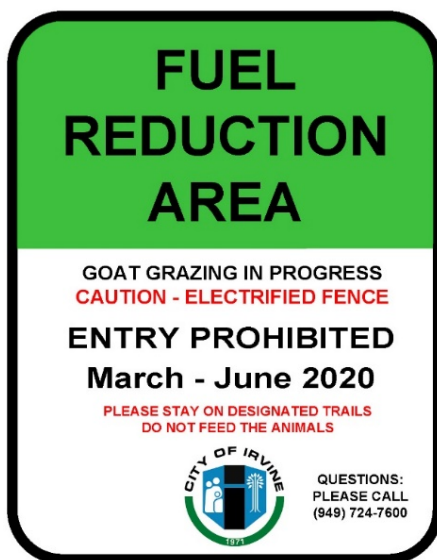




*Solar-powered electric mesh or orange fencing protect desired plants and contain goats*

## Proposed/Sample Signage

Signs will be placed along the project boundary to provide safety warning and public education for the project.



*Safety signage to be posted in multiple, visible places along perimeter of grazing areas*



*Public education sandwich board to be posted at designated areas and moved with the grazing areas, as needed*

## Animal Care



Animal Care at Sage Environmental Group.

We employ Best Management Practices in Livestock Biosecurity to ensure the health of livestock and guard animals by preventing the spread of disease on location(s).

### **Item 1. Animal Guard Dogs**

Treated and cared for by:

Dr. Tillema  
Tillema Veterinary Clinic, Corona, CA  
708 N Main St #708, Corona, CA 92880  
(951) 547-1675  
[tillemavetclinic.com](http://tillemavetclinic.com)

**Annual vaccines for the following: Distemper, Parvovirus, Hepatitis, Rabies, Flea, Tick, Rattlesnake Bite and Boosters**

- a. Komondor Breed, Age 4 Name Boomer
- b. Komondor Breed Age 4 Name Sooner
- c. Great Pyrenes Breed, Age 5 Name Tuffy
- d. Great Pyrenes Breed, Age 2 Name Duke
- e. Border Collie, Age 2 Name Waylon

### **Item 2. Meat Goats for Weed Abatement and Vegetation Management**

Treated and cared for by:

Dr. Tillema  
Tillema Veterinary Clinic, Corona, CA  
708 N Main St #708, Corona, CA 92880  
(951) 547-1675  
[tillemavetclinic.com](http://tillemavetclinic.com)

**Annual, Semi Annual and Quarterly treatments for the following: Arthritis Encephalitis or Coccidias, Chronic Wasting, Worms, Lice, Scrapple for Interstate Transport, Hoof Trimming, ring worm and fly's.**

- a) Boer Breed
- b) Spanish Breed

Note: These breeds are selected due to their normal resistance to disease such as hoof rot, pink eye, ring worm and internal parasites.

### **Item 3. Nutrition and Feed Program.**

Vegetation Management goats require a minimum of 12% to 15% daily protein in their diets. While grazing is a good source of protein (8% to 10%) , SEG uses further supplemental feeds in their daily diet to assure they are getting a minimum protein and iron necessary.

#### **Supplemental Feed Daily.**

- Purina Grower Feed
- Purina Meat Goat Feed
- Orchard, Bermuda and Alfalfa Grasses or Hay
- Mineral Blocks to maintain iron and mineral requirements

## **Additional Materials**

Minutes  
PUENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY  
CITIZENS TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
October 20, 2021

This meeting took place remotely in accordance with Government Code section 54953(e) et seq. (AB 361) and Resolution 21-03 adopted by the Board on October 20, 2021. Members of the public could 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

**- and - 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>**

The special meeting of the Citizens Technical Advisory Committee was held on Wednesday, October 20, 2021, via video and telephonically.

**I. CALL TO ORDER.**

The Chair, Charles Lawrence, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 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
	Gina Natoli	County of Los Angeles
	Roy Francis, Vice Chair	La Habra Heights
	Catherine Houwen	La Habra Heights
	Adam Nazaroff	La Habra Heights

<b>Members Absent:</b>	Karen Chang	County of Los Angeles
	John Houser	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 SEPTEMBER 14, 2021, REGULAR MEETING.**

Member Nazaroff motioned to approve these minutes as drafted. Member Houwen seconded this motion, and in a roll call vote the motion passed with Vice Chair Francis and Member Natoli abstaining.

**V. STANDING REPORTS:**

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

Member Andros reported that Executive Director Gullo has been posting very actively this past month on Instagram.

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

There was nothing to report for this item.

**VI. DISCUSSION, RECEIVE AND FILE AUGUST 2021 MOUNTAINS RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY (MRCA) RANGER REPORT.**

Deputy Chief Ranger Hughes answered questions from some Committee members and added that the Whittier Police are using evidence from the Authority's security cameras at Arroyo Pescadero, in their pursuit of several theft suspects. The Committee received and filed this report.

**VII. DISCUSS AND UPDATE REGARDING BROWN ACT COMPLIANCE FOR REMOTE MEETINGS FOLLOWING ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 361.**

Executive Director Gullo briefly reviewed this item as presented in the staff report, and there was little discussion.

**VIII. RECEIVE AND FILE INFORMATION ABOUT AUTHORITY VOLUNTEERS RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS: CLAUDIA ALVAREZ, LICHIA GONZALES, AND PAM HILL.**

Executive Director Gullo reviewed this item as presented in the staff report, adding that approximately 25 of the Authority's volunteers remain active despite the continuing pandemic conditions. The Committee received and filed this report.

**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.**

Executive Director Gullo reviewed this item as presented in the staff report, adding that both Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn and the City of Whittier have expressed desire to contribute funding toward the implementation of this recognition of Bob Henderson's extensive service.

**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.**

Executive Director Gullo briefly reviewed this item as presented in the staff report, adding that the Board of Directors approved execution of this contract at their meeting earlier today.

**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.**

Executive Director Gullo briefly reviewed this item as presented in the staff report, adding that the Board of Directors approved this purchase at their meeting earlier today.

**XII. DISCUSSION AND UPDATE REGARDING CONTRACT FOR ROOF REPLACEMENT ON AUTHORITY OWNED PROPERTY.**

Executive Director Gullo briefly reviewed this item as presented in the staff report, adding that the Board of Directors approved execution of this contract at their meeting earlier today.

**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.**

Ecologist Mariscal reviewed this item as presented in the staff report, adding that the agreement's initial term will actually be for two years instead of one year, and can be renewed annually thereafter. Executive Director Gullo noted that the Board of Directors approved execution of this agreement at their meeting earlier today.

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

Executive Director Gullo reported that there was recently another small fire along Colima Road, the second within a week's time, and this one was on Oct. 15 and only about 50' x 30' in size before it was extinguished by county fire personnel. She also noted that the Conservation Corps of Long Beach is continuing its brush clearance efforts which expand on the clearances already accomplished by the rangers and the Authority's contractors.

Chair Lawrence noted that the City of Whittier recently received \$5 million for the renovation of Parnell Park's facilities, and Executive Director Gullo noted that the Authority will be seeking similar funding next year for its own projects.

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

There being no further comments, or business to be discussed, Chair Lawrence adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting date is November 16, 2021.



November 23, 2021

Stephen Kirschenbaum, Esq.  
Law Offices of Gipson Hoffman & Pancione  
1901 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1100  
Los Angeles, California 90067-6002

**Appreciation for Notification by Trustee**

Dear Mr. Kirschenbaum:

Thank you very much for your November 8, 2021, letter to the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (Habitat Authority) regarding the Notification by Trustee sent on behalf of Morse Taylor and Monica Albin, as Trustees of the Albin Family 2020 Trust, dated March 11, 2020.

The Albins' anticipated generous donation will greatly contribute to the Habitat Authority's mission of preserving and protecting the Puente Hills Preserve, especially at this critical wildlife linkage point, for the benefit of the regional wildlife populations and their habitat. The Habitat Authority greatly appreciates this future gift and wishes Mrs. Albin a long and healthy life.

We offer heartfelt condolences on the passing of Dr. Albin.

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Michael Hughes", is positioned above the printed name and title.

Michael Hughes  
Chair, Board of Directors

C: Board of Directors and Advisory Committee



## Local mountain lion inbreeding grows dire, but relief in sight

New study details biological evidence of inbreeding, which could lead to their local extinction.



*This female mountain lion appears to be posing for a trail camera in the western Santa Ana Mountain foothills, in this photo taken Sept. 17, 2021, as part of research by the UC Davis Wildlife Health Center. (Courtesy of UC Davis Wildlife Health Center)*

By [Martin Wisckol](#) | [mwisckol@scng.com](mailto:mwisckol@scng.com) | Orange County Register

PUBLISHED: November 10, 2021 at 7:01 a.m. | UPDATED: November 10, 2021 at 1:02 p.m.

Plans for wildlife crossings that would expand two key Southern California mountain lion ranges could be coming to fruition in the nick of time to save the animals, also known as cougars, pumas and ghost cats.

A new study details biological evidence that the lions of the Santa Monica and Santa Ana mountain ranges are experiencing inbreeding reactions that could lead to their local extinction. Hemmed in by freeways and urbanization, they're restricted to areas too small to support the genetic diversity needed for survival.

[Scientists in 2019 calculated](#) that those two populations will go extinct within 50 years unless the gene pools broaden, but the new study is the first to show that the consequences of inbreeding have already begun.

The study, published last month in the journal [Theriogenology](#), documents abnormal sperm, problems with testicle development, and kinked tails among Southern California cougars. All are symptoms of a level of inbreeding that can affect biological health — including the ability to reproduce.

“It wasn’t surprising exactly — it was what we thought would happen,” said Winston Vickers, a UC Davis researcher who has studied the region’s cougars since 2001 and who contributed to the new study. Leading the research was Audra Huffmeyer, who conducted the work while completing her biology Ph.D studies at UCLA.

But Vickers added that one finding was particularly alarming.



*A new study details biological signs of among Southern California mountain lions, which could lead to their local extinction. Above, a mother mountain lion with three kittens at Irvine Ranch Natural Landmarks in the Santa Ana Mountains. (Courtesy of Irvine Ranch Conservancy)*

Last year, National Park Service biologist [Jeff Sikich reported](#) two lions in the Santa Monica Mountains with kinked tails, one of which had only one descended testicle. That was an initial warning that inbreeding may be growing severe.

However, physical accidents can also lead to kinked tails and the sample size of a single incidence of testicle abnormality was exceedingly small.

Huffmeyer's study increased the kinked tail count in the greater Los Angeles area to four and added a second incidence of testicle abnormality. More dramatically, all five of the dead lions examined had abnormal sperm.

"The percentage of sperm that was abnormal surprised me," Vickers said. "It's still a low sample size but the fact that all five had it raises the level of alarm. There was an expectation that we would see this, but it was a bit surprising to see it at this stage."

### *Perilous roads*

Every year or so, a Southern California mountain lion tries to escape its confines for broader ranges nearby but gets killed crossing the freeway. In the Santa Monica Mountains, that usually happens on the 101 Freeway between Woodland Hills and Thousand Oaks. In the Santa Ana Mountains, it occurs on the 15 Freeway near Temecula.

Even rarer is a successful crossing, as those who try usually get hit by a vehicle and die.

But in mid October, a year-old female crossed the 15 Freeway from the Santa Ana Mountains at or near Warm Springs Creek in Murrieta. It was the first documented successful crossing to or from those mountains since at least 2016, when genetic testing determined a male in the Santa Anas had crossed from the much larger Eastern Peninsular Range east of the freeway.

The young female had been captured in February by the state Department of Fish and Wildlife after her mother was killed by a car on Antonio Parkway in South Orange County. Dubbed F291 by Vickers' research group, the animal was released with an electronic tracking collar in June, when it was determined to be old enough to survive on its own.

Vickers said it's not clear if F291 crossed over the freeway or under it, but noted that there's an underpass at Warm Springs Creek. Once east of the freeway, she followed the creek bed until reaching a high water area that would have forced her to the edge of the surrounding subdivision if she wanted to continue.



*This young female mountain lion was released in the Santa Ana Mountains in June 2021 after a four-month stay with a wildlife center. She'd been found with a sibling alone when their mother was hit by a car and killed near the Tijeras Creek Golf Course in Rancho Santa Margarita. In October 2021, she was tracked as crossing the 15 Freeway in Murrieta and then returning to the Santa Ana Mountains.(Courtesy of San Diego Humane Society)*

Instead, she went back to the other side of the freeway and returned to the Santa Ana Mountains. It's the first documented case of a lion successfully crossing the 15 Freeway in both directions — but that's not the only unusual aspect of her trip.

Of the seven previous animals documented to have successfully crossed that freeway, all were males, who are typically more motivated to seek out broader ranges. There are an estimated 16 adult lions in the roughly 600 square acres of Santa Ana Mountains, 11 females and five males. Males are far more territorial than females, typically guarding a home range of more than 100 square miles. They're also more likely to kill each other fighting, and to be hit trying to cross the freeway in search of undisputed territory.

Finally, F291's crossing location was not the path usually pursued by the region's cougars, who are deterred by the amount of urbanization east of the freeway. More common is a stretch beginning six miles to the south, at Temecula Creek — an area currently being studied for multiple possible crossings.

### *Relief in sight*

While few mountain lions try crossing the freeways at the Santa Ana and Santa Monica mountains, plenty appear to consider the possibility.

Vickers has documented mountain lions sitting for hours on the Santa Ana Mountain foothills near the 15 Freeway, as though gazing longingly at the promised land. The Eastern Peninsular Range on the other side is a wildlife area that extends into Mexico.

Similarly, to the north, the Santa Monica Mountains are separated by the 101 Freeway from the Santa Susanna Mountains, which lead to the vast Western Sierra Nevada range. There are an estimated seven adults lions in the 230 square miles of the Santa Monica Mountains, five females and two males.

Plans for a wildlife bridge over the 101 Freeway at Liberty Canyon in Agoura Hills have been underway for more than a decade, with construction expected to begin by February and be completed in late 2024, according to Beth Pratt, regional executive director of the National Wildlife Federation.

The group has raised nearly \$73 million toward its \$85 million goal for the project. So far, there have been 4,500 donors. They include the California Wildlife Conservation Board and the Annenberg Foundation, which each gave \$25 million. The bridge is awaiting final approval from Caltrans and then will be put out to bid.

"I can't wait to cut the ribbon and see the first wild creature to use it," Pratt said.



*An artist rendering of the Liberty Canyon wildlife crossing, which will help restore connectivity in the Santa Monica Mountains, enriching the gene pool of the threatened cougars in those mountains. Backers hope to begin construction by February. (Courtesy of National Wildlife Federation/Living Habitats)*

Things aren't quite as far along at the prime crossing area for the Santa Ana Mountains on the 15 Freeway, but they're moving in that direction.

At Temecula Creek, there is a broad, undeveloped freeway underpass connecting wildlife areas on either side that mountain lions have approached but rarely, if ever, used. The Nature Conservancy added \$117,000 to a \$400,000 grant from the Wildlife Conservation Board for detailed plans to make the underpass more attractive to the animals. Those plans are expected to be completed by fall 2023, with construction beginning the following year at a cost of \$500,000 to \$1 million, according to The Nature Conservancy's Trish Smith.

Meanwhile, Caltrans is completing a fencing project south of that underpass to prevent the lions from the usually fatal attempts at crossing the freeway — and which is also hoped to guide them toward the underpass.

Additionally, Caltrans has received a \$1.3 million Wildlife Conservation Board grant to study a possible wildlife bridge two miles south of Temecula Creek as well as a second underpass, with that study to be completed by March 31, 2025, according Caltrans' Scott Quinnell.

Cal Poly Pomona engineering faculty and students were recruited by Vickers to develop the [conceptual plans](#) now being fleshed out the Caltrans and The Nature Conservancy.

In addition to Caltrans and the conservation board, the lions have found a Sacramento friend in the Fish and Game Commission, which last year granted the animals temporary protective status in six geographic areas, including the Santa Ana, Santa Monica, San Gabriel and San Bernardino mountains.

The state is in the home stretch of a study to determine if that temporary status should be made permanent, with that work to be completed in the spring.

“There’s been this steady dawning of awareness of the possibility of local extinction,” Vickers said. “They can travel such long distances, and they would strike one as the least likely to be trapped. But by golly, that’s what we’ve done with our freeways and development.”

But the growing momentum for wildlife crossings is “definitely cause for optimism,” he added.

*Still not enough?*

Nonetheless, a 2020 study raises the question of whether wildlife crossings on the 15 Freeway will ultimately provide enough real estate for mountain lions — even by connecting the Santa Ana Mountains to the Eastern Peninsular Range.

Of the five male lions with abnormal sperm, one was from the Eastern Peninsular Range. That could be coincidence, as North American cougars are already more likely to have abnormal sperm than their South American counterparts. Or it could be because that male came from the Santa Ana Mountains, carrying the inbred genetics across the freeway. Genetic testing will help determine if that’s the case.

Finally, there already could be enough inbreeding east of the 15 Freeway to cause sperm abnormalities.

The 2020 study, led by state Fish and Wildlife biologist Justin Dellinger, suggests that the mountain lions ultimately need at least 10,000 square kilometers of range — 3,900 square miles — to survive in the long run. The Santa Ana Mountains are about 600 square miles. The Eastern Peninsular Range, which includes the San Jacinto and Palomar mountains, are about 1,800 square miles.

That would leave the two combined areas, known simply as the Peninsular Range, well short of Dellinger’s estimated need.

Also falling short of the mark would be the combined San Gabriel and San Bernardino mountains, a 1,150-square-mile area known as the Transverse Range.

But combine the Transverse Range with the Peninsular Range and there are 3,550 square miles of nature — nearly Dellinger’s minimum.

The Nature Conservancy is working with others, including Caltrans, to connect those two ranges. In April, the groups held a workshop on linking the two areas and a report on that idea is due to come out soon, according to The Nature Conservancy’s Trish Smith.

“Linkages and wildlife crossings in the greater I-10 area are important to connecting the Transverse Range to the Peninsular Range, especially for mountain lions,” Smith said.

“Lots of challenges there to securing connectivity, but we are starting to work on resolving those issues.”