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

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 16, 2026

To: Board Members

Andrea Gullo

From: Andrea Gullo, Executive Director

Subject: Presentation, discussion, receive and file fiscal year 2025-26 Authority workplan and activities.

Recommendation:
That the Board receive and file 2025-26 workplan and activities.

Background:
Attached is the Authority's end-of-the-year update of the agency workplan for fiscal year 2025-26, its summary notes, and the Restoration Workplan. The format of the agency workplan in general does not reflect routine day-to-day and core functions of staff's time which essentially support the mission of the agency. Due to workload, staff vacancy, unexpected happenings, and circumstances beyond control, progress on a few of these items is not at the level previously estimated or anticipated.

The highlights of the agency workplan are: 1) execution and recording of the agreements including the heli-hydrant project with La Habra Heights, 2) creation of the Measure PH Fiscal Oversight Advisory Committee and hosting the first meeting, 3) hiring of a staff member, 4) successful filing of the first Long Term Management Plan annual reports for two completed habitat mitigation programs, 5) execution and implementation of the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy grant, and 6) execution of the CalFire grant.

The Authority workplan and day-to-day Authority mission-driven tasks are in accordance with the attached Authority's Strategic Planning Guidelines, which set priorities for the agency core functions. Below are year-end highlights of four of the agency's core functions: outreach and involvement, resource management, preserve management and administration.

Public Outreach and Involvement:
Per the Authority's Strategic Planning Guidelines, the agency has historically been committed to providing high quality opportunities for outdoor learning and community involvement. For FY 25-26, as in recent years, outdoor education and interpretive programming[1] were not prioritized and outdoor school programs did not occur due to ongoing staff vacancies. The Authority's first full-time Recreation Outreach Supervisor was hired in June 2026.

[1] Interpreters connect visitors to important natural, cultural, and historical resources at parks and anywhere that people come to learn about places. The National Association for Interpretation defines interpretation as "a mission-based communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource."

The following is a synopsis of the activities for community outreach:

- approximately 15 engaged volunteers
- 680 volunteer hours (last year was 740 hours), valued at $28,390 for the year and overall valued at $852,743 since record keeping began in fiscal year 2010-11.
- 97 events participated, of which 89 were hosted public hikes

Also, this year as a part of the Authority's outreach and educational efforts, the Authority hired a consultant in September 2025 to assist with social media and outreach. Overall, four e-newsletters were published, one direct mailer to local residents was mailed, five press releases were issued, several articles mentioned the Authority directly, a holiday party was hosted and one special event was covered by the news media.

Resource Management:
We are committed to promoting and protecting biodiversity in the Preserve. Main ecological activities this past year included recording the conservation easement for the Metro Heights mitigation project in favor of the Watershed Conservation Authority, and submitting the first Long Term Management Plan annual reports for two completed mitigation projects in Powder Canyon.. Restoration projects are on schedule and within budget, and at the end of FY 25-26, 40 acres were being restored/enhanced. To date 282 acres in the Preserve have been fully restored. Attached is a detailed end-of-the-year restoration workplan report. Below is a summary of the revenue and acreage from the restoration program. Overall, the mitigation restoration program has attracted an estimated $20 to $30 million of outside funding benefitting the hills.

Habitat Restoration	***Implemented By***	***Fees Received from 2002 to present****	***Acreage Ongoing***	***Acreage Complete***	***Total***
Restoration	Habitat Authority	not applicable	5.0	122.4	127.4
Mitigation	Habitat Authority (ILF)	$3,446,093	35.3	84.7	120
Mitigation	Outside Entity (PIM)	$1,083,550	0	74.8	74.8
Totals		**$4,529,643**	**40.3**	**281.8**	**322.1**

**Fees include mitigation access, administration, and management*

Preserve Management:
While protecting biodiversity remains the primary priority, the Authority is also committed to offering low-impact recreational opportunities so long as they are balanced with long-term ecological sustainability. Preserve management and safety was primarily accomplished via the various grant programs, Measure PH funding, fuel clearance, routine trailhead maintenance, trail repairs and the ranger/park services contract with the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA).

Administration/General Operations:
The Habitat Authority operates with minimal staffing and professional services support, employing four full-time staff members. The Recreation Outreach Supervisor position was filled in June 2026. To supplement internal staffing, the Habitat Authority contracts with the

City of Whittier for personnel services and with the County of Los Angeles for financial and investment support. The Authority also contracts with an outside firm, LSL, for accounting support. Legal services and public outreach are also obtained through contractual agreements. During the past fiscal year, the Habitat Authority executed 26 new contracts and four contract amendments to support its obligations and project implementation. Additionally, staff issued 8 special use permits this past year.

Staff continues to maintain organizational capacities and equipment for operations. Operations include but are not limited to document retention, accounts payable, technology services, the website, public records requests, vehicle and housing upkeep, insurance, audits, accounting services, and personnel services. Furthermore, over 525 payment request memos (a 9% increase from the previous year) were made to Los Angeles County (the Authority's Controller) and at least an additional 12 were made to City of Whittier to facilitate payment of credit card costs. Lastly. unique website active users was at 79.9K (a 98% increase from last year's 40.3K), and of that amount 75K were new users (a 107% increase from last year's 36.2K).

The Authority strives to provide friendly and responsive service to the community. Staff responded to a variety of inquiries from local residents, addressing specific concerns as well as general inquiries related to trail hours and similar topics. Several house calls were made by rangers and staff when necessary, and many additional calls to the ranger emergency services phone number were fielded by the MRCA.

<u>Fiscal Impact:</u>
None.

<u>Attachments:</u>
End of Year update FY 25-26 agency workplan
End of Year Summary of workplan
End of Year update FY 25-26 restoration update
Authority's Strategic Planning Guidelines

End of Year
Workplan FY 2025-26

	GOAL	Resp. Party	** Priority Level (1-3)	Est. Completion Date	Update Approx. % Complete	Board Approval Date	Cost / Funding
1	Heli-hydrant project	Board,staff, Attorney	1	Ongoing	100%	direction provided sprg/smmr 2021	
2	Assemble Fiscal Oversight Advisory Committee (Measure PH)	Staff, Partners, Board	1	12/31/2025	100%	Jun-25	
3	Hire (2) Staff -Maintenance/Trails & Education/VolCoordinator	ED	1	1/31/2026	50%	Jun-25	Measure PH
4	Administer Caltrans grant	Staff	1	6/30/2026	99%	5/25/2023	Caltrans
5	Seek M&S funding reimbursement Fys 22-23, 23-24, 24-25	ED, Prog Analyst	1	Ongoing	33%	6/30/2022, 5/25/2023,June 2024	County
6	Implement new Long Term Management Plans (LTMPs)	Ecologist	1	Ongoing	Complete and Ongoing	Jun-25	The San Diego Foundation endowments
7	Repair Authority residences	ED, Rgr	2	6/30/2026	80%	direction provided in spring 2021, and 2024	State funds through Caltrans, RMC
8	Create Hazard Mitigation Plan	Staff, Board, CTAC	2	6/30/2028	5%	Jun-25	Access Fee / Excess mitigation funds
9	Sign agreement and implement additional grant funding (fuel modelling, veg mapping, fuel clearance, gate/fence installation, acquisition, etc.)	Staff	2	Ongoing	50%	Jun-25	RMC
10	Community Outreach (Measure PH)	Staff, Brd subcom., Board, CTAC	2	Ongoing	Ongoing	Jun-25	General operating funds
11	Establish new office location	ED, Board	3	12/31/2025		Jun-25	General operating funds

EOY 25-26 Workplan SUMMARY

	GOAL	Notes
1	Heli-hydrant project	Completed and recorded.
2	Assemble Fiscal Oversight Advisory Committee (Measure PH)	All members were appointed, and the first meeting was held in May.
3	Hire (2) Staff -Maintenance/Trails & Education/VolCoordinator	The Recreation Outreach Supervisor was hired.
4	Administer Caltrans grant	This grant is almost completed.
5	Seek M&S funding reimbursement Fys 22-23, 23-24, 24-25	Delayed primarily due to workload.
6	Implement new Long Term Management Plans (LTMPs)	The first two LTMP annual reports were successfully submitted in June 2026, and a framework moving forward has been established.
7	Repair Authority residences	One Authority residence is nearly completed with major repairs and home hardening. The other residence which completed repairs and improvements approximately two years ago will be addressed for additional repairs and maintenance in the future.
8	Create Hazard Mitigation Plan	A cost estimate was received, but this has been delayed due to workload.
9	Sign agreement and implement additional grant funding (fuel modelling, veg mapping, fuel clearance, gate/fence installation, acquisition, etc.)	Staff has made progress with many elements of the grant, and is on budget and schedule.
10	Community Outreach (Measure PH)	Consistent messaging has been achieved with social media, e-newsletters, mailers and outreach.
11	Establish new office location	No progress.

EOY 25-26 Workplan SUMMARY

Restoration Work Plan
End of the Fiscal Year Update

SUMMARY:					
Overall restoration projects (includes mitigation restoration, habitat restoration, and enhancement/weeding):					
40.3	acres ongoing				
281.8	acres completed				
322.1	acres total				
Habitat Authority Restoration Projects:					
Restoration - 1.0 acres Ongoing, 64.33 acres Complete, 65.33 acres Total					
Ongoing Projects	**Activity**	**Original Completion Date**	**Estimated Completion Date**	**Status**	**Comments**
Peppergrass Restoration (1.0 ac)	Planting cactus, seeding, and maintenance	Spring 2019	Spring 2027	Ongoing	RMC grant #25001 has funded two additional years of maintenance/weeding (2025-26 and 2026-27)
Enhancement/weeding - 4.0 acres Ongoing, 58.06 acres Complete, 62.06 acres Total					
Ongoing projects include seeding and hand weeding a portion of the former OCWR mitigation area, weeding the Arroyo Pescader ADA Loop Trail, and woody invasive removal along Turnbull Canyon Trail. General weed removal efforts, such as goat grazing (74 ac), are not included in the acreage totals.					
HABITAT AUTHORITY RESTORATION PROJECTS SUMMARY					
5	ACRES ONGOING				
122.4	ACRES COMPLETE				
127.4	ACRES TOTAL				
Mitigation Projects:					
Outside Entity Implementing (0 acres Ongoing, 74.8 acres Complete, 74.8 acres Total)					
Habitat Authority Implementing (35.3 acres Ongoing, 84.7 acres Complete, 120 acres Total)					
Ongoing Projects	**Activity**	**Original Completion Date**	**Estimated/Actual Completion Date**	**Status**	**Comments**
Turnbull Riparian Restoration					

*Original completion dates assume two years of grow and kill cycles

Restoration Work Plan
End of the Fiscal Year Update

1.35 ac Riparian (Turnbull Canyon)	Seeding and maintenance	Fall 2017 (Original mitigation project)	Fall 2026	Ongoing	Formerly Permittee Implemented Mitigation (PXP/Sentinel); transferred to Habitat Authority in 2021
Ongoing Projects (continued)	**Activity**	**Original Completion Date**	**Estimated/Actual Completion Date**	**Status**	**Comments**
Olinda (OCWR2)					Conservation Easement recorded
19.86 ac CSS (Arroyo San Miguel)	Site Preparation	Fall 2018		Complete	
	Temporary Irrigation install	Fall 2018		Complete	
	Grow & Kill*	Fall 2020		Complete	
	Planting*	Winter 2020	Spring 2021	Complete	
	Hydroseeding*	Winter 2020	Spring 2021	Complete	
	Maintenance	Spring 2026		Ongoing	Currently in maintenance year 4
	Final performance monitoring report	Winter 2026		Planned	Project signoff expected by February 2027
Brea 57 / Lambert					Conservation Easement recorded
2.1 ac CSS (Powder Canyon)	Site Preparation	Fall 2019		Complete	
	Temporary Irrigation install	Fall 2019		Complete	
	Grow & Kill*	Fall 2021		Complete	
	Planting*	Winter 2021		Complete	
	Hydroseeding*	Winter 2021		Complete	
	Maintenance	Spring 2027		Ongoing	Currently in maintenance year 3
	Final performance monitoring report	Winter 2027		Planned	Project signoff expected by February 2028
Metro Heights					Conservation Easement recorded
12 ac CSS (Powder Canyon & Arroyo Pescadero)	Site Preparation	Fall 2024		Complete	Project broke ground Oct 2024
	Temporary Irrigation install	Fall 2024		Complete	
	Grow & Kill*	Fall 2026		Ongoing	
	Planting & Hydroseeding*	Winter 2026		Planned	
	Maintenance	Spring 2032		Planned	

*Original completion dates assume two years of grow and kill cycles

Restoration Work Plan
End of the Fiscal Year Update

	Final performance monitoring report	Winter 2032		Planned	
MITIGATION PROJECTS SUMMARY					
35.3	ACRES ONGOING				
159.4	ACRES COMPLETE				
194.7	ACRES TOTAL				

*Original completion dates assume two years of grow and kill cycles

PUENTE HILLS HABITAT PRESERVATION AUTHORITY
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Strategic Planning Guidelines

1. **Administration and General Operations**

Goal A: *Create effective financial and operational forecasts.*

Goal B: *Develop and maintain organizational capacities for operational needs.*

2. **Acquisition**

Goal A: *Add acreage to strengthen existing habitat areas.*

Goal B: *Ensure linkage to eastern habitat area.*

Priority of Acquisitions:

High Priority
- Dark Canyon
- Linkage area at Hacienda Boulevard and restricted "Corridor" between Powder Canyon and former Unocal property

Priority
- Additional open space to strengthen existing habitat areas

Other
- Opportunity purchases

3. **Preserve Management**

Goal A: *Provide adequate public safety and management services.*

Goal B: *Offer access and recreational opportunities for the public benefit, balancing with ecological sustainability.*

Goal C: *Facilitate various maintenance projects that benefit the Preserve.*

4. **Public Outreach, Education and Involvement (Interpretation)**

Goal A: *Provide high-quality educational and outdoor learning opportunities.*

Goal B: *Provide opportunities for community involvement.*

5. **Resource Management**

Goal A: *Promote and protect biodiversity as well as natural and cultural resources.*

Goal B: *Promote management practices that protect ecological health of the environment.*

Goal C: *Address various projects that have the potential to negatively affect the Preserve, and work to avoid, minimize or mitigate their impacts.*