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COSTA MESA, CA 92626
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Assembly
California Legislature



ALLAN R. MANSOOR
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, SEVENTY-FOURTH DISTRICT

COMMITTEES
CO-CHAIR: LEGISLATIVE ETHICS
VICE CHAIR: JOBS, ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT, AND THE ECONOMY
BUDGET
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 1 ON
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
HEALTH
JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT

September 2, 2014

Douglas Bosco, Chair
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Support for Aliso Creek Estuary Restoration Plan

Dear Mr. Bosco:

The Laguna Ocean Foundation has submitted a proposal to the California State Coastal Conservancy for funding to develop a feasible concept plan to restore the mouth of Aliso Creek to a healthy and fully functional estuary. I support this project.

Aliso Creek once drained to the Pacific through a broad, expansive estuary with extensive wetlands. However, the creek's estuarine habitat has suffered degradation through modification of its hydrologic regime and physical modification of the mouth of the creek and its banks. The Aliso Estuary has extremely high restoration value, due to its key geographic location between two regionally significant ecosystem reserve systems: the terrestrial greenbelt, comprised of approx. 15,000 acres of preserved natural habitats in the San Joaquin Hills, and the bluebelt of the coastal and offshore Laguna State Marine Reserve recently established through the Marine Life Protection Act.

The principal obstacle to restoration of the Aliso Estuary is lack of a restoration plan. The proposed planning project presented for your consideration will focus on restoring the creek's coastal wetland habitats to support a wide range of fish and wildlife. The project will be driven by a process involving local landowners, local agencies and other stakeholders, and guided by the expertise of skilled restoration ecologists.

Thank you for your consideration and please don't hesitate to contact my office at (714) 668-2100 if I can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Allan R. Mansoor".

Allan R. Mansoor,
Assemblymember, 74th District



PATRICIA C. BATES

VICE CHAIR, ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SUPERVISOR, FIFTH DISTRICT

ORANGE COUNTY HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
333 W. SANTA ANA BLVD.
10 CIVIC CENTER, SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA 92701
PHONE (714) 834-3550 FAX (714) 834-2670
<http://bos.ocgov.com/fifth/>

August 27, 2014

Douglas Bosco, Chair
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

SUBJECT: Aliso Creek Estuary Restoration Planning: Support

Dear Mr. Bosco:

Laguna Ocean Foundation has submitted a proposal to the California Coastal Conservancy for funding to develop a feasible concept plan to restore the mouth of Aliso Creek to a healthy and fully functional estuary. The proposed project will be presented at the Conservancy's October board meeting. The project was added to the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project Work Program in November 2013. I support this project.

Aliso Creek once drained to the Pacific through a broad, expansive estuary with extensive wetlands. However, the creek's estuarine habitat has suffered degradation through modification of its hydrologic regime (from urbanization of the watershed) and physical modification of the mouth of the creek and its banks. The Aliso Estuary has extremely high restoration value, due to its key geographic location between two regionally significant ecosystem reserve systems: the terrestrial greenbelt, comprised of approx. 15,000 acres of preserved natural habitats in the San Joaquin Hills, and the bluebelt of the coastal and offshore Laguna State Marine Reserve recently established through the Marine Life Protection Act.

The principal obstacle to restoration of the Aliso Estuary is lack of a restoration plan. The proposed planning project presented for your consideration will focus on restoring the creek's coastal wetland habitats to support a wide range of fish and wildlife, including listed species such as the Tidewater Goby. The project will be driven by a consensus process involving local landowners, local agencies and other stakeholders, guided by the expertise of skilled restoration ecologists. The ultimate goal is a plan with strong local support that is well-positioned for implementation.

I thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of the Aliso Estuary Restoration Planning project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patricia C. Bates".

Patricia C. Bates
Fifth District Supervisor
Vice-Chair, Orange County Board of Supervisors

RECEIVED

SEP 02 2014

**COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.**

LAGUNA CANYON FOUNDATION

PO Box 4895 Laguna Beach CA 92652 Tel 949.497.8324 Fax 949.376.5590
lagunacf2@lagunacanyon.org www.lagunacanyon.org



KEEP IT WILD!

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Tax ID #33-0441816 501(c)(3) Non-profit
status determined by IRS letter of 6/14/91

Douglas Bosco, Chair
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

SUBJECT: Support for the Aliso Creek Estuary Restoration Plan

Dear Mr. Bosco:

Laguna Canyon Foundation wholeheartedly supports Laguna Ocean Foundation's proposal to the California Coastal Conservancy for funding to develop a feasible concept plan to restore the mouth of Aliso Creek to a healthy and fully functional estuary. The project was added to the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project Work Program in November 2013 and will presented in October.

Aliso Creek once drained to the Pacific through a broad, expansive estuary with extensive wetlands. However, the creek's estuarine habitat has suffered degradation through modification of its hydrologic regime (from urbanization of the watershed) and physical modification of the mouth of the creek and its banks. The Aliso Estuary has extremely high restoration value, due to its key geographic location between two regionally significant ecosystem reserve systems: the terrestrial greenbelt, comprised of ~15,000 acres of preserved natural habitats in the San Joaquin Hills, and the bluebelt of the coastal and offshore Laguna State Marine Reserve recently established through the Marine Life Protection Act.

Laguna Canyon Foundation has worked to preserve the 20,000 acre South Coast Wilderness for more than twenty years. We are currently working on a large scale restoration upstream in Aliso Creek, and believe a restoration plan for the Aliso Estuary is a critical first step to the preservation of this very important coastal wetland habitat.

The ultimate goal is a plan with strong local support that is well-positioned for implementation. Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of the Aliso Estuary Restoration Planning project.

Sincerely,

Hallie Jones
Executive Director

August 26, 2014

Douglas Bosco, Chairman
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

SUBJECT: Support for proposed Aliso Creek Estuary Restoration Planning Grant

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I am writing to you in support of the proposed Coastal Conservancy proposed grant to the Laguna Ocean Foundation for funding to determine the feasibility of restoring the historic estuary at the mouth of the Aliso Creek watershed in South Laguna. The Conservation Fund (TCF), is a national land trust that has been involved in the protection of wetlands around the country, and has also been a partner with the Coastal Conservancy, the Laguna Canyon Foundation, the County of Orange, and the City of Laguna Beach in the recent acquisitions of remaining private lands within the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park System which includes the Aliso Creek estuary. It is my understanding that the proposed grant will be considered at the Conservancy's October board meeting. .

At one time the Aliso Creek watershed drained to the Pacific Ocean through a scenic and resource rich estuary with extensive wetlands. However, the creek's estuarine habitat has been significantly degraded by the extensive upstream urbanization of the watershed and by other roadway and flood control improvements adjacent to the estuary and the Creek. The Aliso Estuary has extremely high restoration potential, due to its key geographic location between two regionally significant ecosystem reserves: the South Coast Wilderness Park system of more than 20,000 acres of preserved natural habitats, and the newly established Laguna State Marine Reserve recently established through the Marine Life Protection Act.

The proposed grant would allow for the preparation of a feasibility study to determine the possibility of restoring the Aliso Estuary. The proposed planning project presented for your consideration will focus on restoring the creek's coastal wetland habitats to support a wide range of fish and wildlife, including listed species such as the Tidewater Goby. As proposed the project will be driven by a consensus process involving local landowners, local agencies and other stakeholders, guided by the expertise of skilled restoration ecologists. The ultimate goal

Exhibit 6: Project Letters

is a plan with strong local support that is well-positioned for implementation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of the Aliso Estuary Restoration Planning grant.

Sincerely,

R. Scott Ferguson
Director of Southern California Programs
The Conservation Fund

ENDANGERED HABITATS LEAGUE

DEDICATED TO ECOSYSTEM PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE LAND USE



August 18, 2014

Douglas Bosco, Chair
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Aliso Creek Estuary Restoration — *SUPPORT*

Dear Chairman Bosco:

The Endangered Habitats League (EHL) *supports* Laguna Ocean Foundation's proposal to the California Coastal Conservancy to develop a concept plan to restore the mouth of Aliso Creek to a healthy and fully functional estuary. For your reference, EHL is Southern California's only regional conservation group. The project was added to the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project Work Program in November 2013 and will be presented at the October 2014 Board meeting.

Aliso Creek once drained to the Pacific through a broad, expansive estuary with extensive wetlands. However, the creek's estuarine habitat has suffered degradation through modification of its hydrologic regime (from urbanization of the watershed) and physical modification of the mouth of the creek and its banks. The Aliso Estuary has extremely high restoration value, due to its key geographic location between two regionally significant ecosystem reserve systems: the terrestrial "greenbelt," comprised of about 15,000 acres of preserved natural habitats in the San Joaquin Hills, and the "bluebelt" of the coastal and offshore Laguna State Marine Reserve recently established through the Marine Life Protection Act.

The principal obstacle to restoration of the Aliso Estuary is lack of a restoration plan. The proposed planning project will focus on restoring the creek's coastal wetland habitats to support a wide range of fish and wildlife, including listed species such as the Tidewater Goby. A consensus process involving local landowners, local agencies and other stakeholders, guided by the expertise of skilled restoration ecologists, will drive the project. The ultimate goal is a plan with strong local support that is well positioned for implementation.

Thank you for considering our views.

Yours truly,

Dan Silver, MD
Executive Director



3151 Airway Avenue, Suite F-110
Costa Mesa, CA 92626
Phone 714-850-1965
Fax 714-850-1592
www.coastkeeper.org

September 2, 2014

Douglas Bosco, Chair
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

SUBJECT: Aliso Creek Estuary Restoration Planning: Support

Dear Mr. Bosco:

This letter is to express our support for funding the Laguna Ocean Foundation proposal to develop a concept plan to restore the mouth of Aliso Creek. The project was added to the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project Work Program in November 2013 and will be presented at the Coastal Conservancy's October board meeting.

Aliso Creek once drained to the Pacific through a broad, expansive estuary with extensive wetlands. However, the creek's estuarine habitat has suffered degradation through modification of its hydrologic regime from urbanization and physical modification of the mouth of the creek and its banks. The Aliso Estuary has extremely high restoration value, due to its key geographic location between ~15,000 acres of preserved natural habitats in the San Joaquin Hills, and the coastal and offshore Laguna State Marine Reserve recently established through the Marine Life Protection Act.

The principal obstacle to restoration of the Aliso Estuary is lack of a restoration plan. The proposed planning project presented for your consideration will focus on restoring the creek's coastal wetland habitats to support a wide range of fish and wildlife, including listed species such as the Tidewater Goby. The project will be driven by a consensus process involving local landowners, local agencies and other stakeholders, guided by the expertise of skilled restoration ecologists. The ultimate goal is a plan with strong local support that is well-positioned for implementation.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of the Aliso Estuary Restoration Planning project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Raymond T. Hemstra". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Associate Director
Orange County Coastkeeper



August 19, 2014

Douglas Bosco, Chair
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

**SUBJECT: Aliso Creek Estuary Restoration Planning
Letter of Support**

Dear Mr. Bosco:

The Laguna Bluebelt is a coalition of strong groups and talented individuals within and around the town of Laguna Beach, California sharing a common goal of protecting and restoring marine life, conserving biological diversity and maintaining healthy, sustainable marine habitats. We promote educating the public about our local marine resources and enforcement of environmental protection laws and regulations. After achieving city-wide marine protection in 2011, the Coalition now works to inspire people to protect and care for our Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in order to attain a robust recovery.

We are writing in support of the proposal from the Laguna Ocean Foundation for funding to develop a feasibility concept plan to restore the mouth of Aliso Creek to a healthy and fully functional estuary. **We fully support this project and the restoration of the Aliso Creek estuary – a coastal wetlands site for endangered Tidewater Goby and Southern steelhead trout.** The proposed project will be presented at the Conservancy's board meeting in October.

Aliso Creek once flowed seasonally to the Pacific through a broad, expansive estuary with extensive wetlands. In recent decades, Aliso Creek's lagoon and estuarine habitat has suffered degradation through from urbanization of the watershed and physical modification of the mouth of the creek and its banks. The Aliso Estuary has extremely high restoration value, due to its key geographic location between two regionally significant ecosystem reserve systems: the 15,000 acre terrestrial **Greenbelt**, comprised of preserved natural habitats in the San Joaquin Hills, and the **Bluebelt** of the coastal and offshore Laguna Beach State Marine Reserve recently established through the Marine Life Protection Act.

Importantly, the principal obstacle to restoration of the Aliso Estuary has been the absence of an integrated restoration plan. The proposed planning project presented for your consideration addresses this deficiency and will focus on restoring the creek's coastal wetland habitats to support a wide range of fish and wildlife, including listed species such as the

Exhibit 6: Project Letters

Tidewater Goby. We applaud the multiple community benefits associated with wetland recovery projects that include improved beach ocean water quality, less beach sand erosion, protection of near shore tidepool and kelp habitats. The project, driven by a consensus process involving local landowners, local agencies and other stakeholders, and guided by the skilled restoration ecologists, promises a plan with strong local support that is well-positioned for implementation.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of the Aliso Estuary Restoration Planning project. We look forward to working together to restore this important coastal wetlands along the Laguna Bluebelt.

Sincerely,

Laguna Bluebelt Coalition
Mike Beanan, Acting Facilitator

mike@lagunabluebelt.org

cc: Deborah Ruddock druddock@scc.ca.gov.

Victoria Skimboards Inc.
2955 Laguna Cyn. Rd. #1
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
(949)494-0059 Fax 494-5485
www.victoriaskimboards.com

8-26-14

Douglas Bosco, Chair
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

Subject: Aliso Creek Estuary Restoration Planning: Support

Dear Mr. Bosco,

I am the owner of Victoria Skimboards and we stage an internationally well known skimboard contest at Aliso Beach every year since 1976.

It is embarrassing how long our beach has been rated as one of the dirtiest beaches in California. Since I was 6 years old, that's 55 years now, I have been told that Aliso Creek will give you boils.

It is time to reestablish the wetlands as a natural filter for the creek.

I am trained as a Biologist, with my BS from Stanford University.

I was a board member of the Laguna Ocean Foundation for several years. LOF is a founding member of the Orange County Marine Protected Areas Council.

I have collected water samples from Aliso Creek in six different locations, on a weekly basis for over a year. This was part of our efforts as founders of the Laguna Beach Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation.

I have given a great deal of thought to the situation, and believe that the restoration of the estuary, and the re-establishment of a natural berm, as well as the placing of revetments upstream to slow and spread the creek path into a shallower, wider streambed are a big part of the solution.

In addition, several basins need to be constructed upstream of lower Aliso Canyon, to allow the urban runoff to settle before flowing into the streambed proper.

Sincerely,

Charles L. Haines, Tex

September 4, 2014

Douglas Bosco, Chair
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

SUBJECT: Aliso Creek Estuary Restoration Planning: Support

Dear Mr. Bosco:

Laguna Ocean Foundation has submitted a proposal to the California Coastal Conservancy for funding to develop a feasible concept plan to restore the mouth of Aliso Creek to a healthy and fully functional estuary. The proposed project will be presented at the Conservancy's October board meeting. The project was added to the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project Work Program in November 2013. San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research supports this project.

Aliso Creek once drained to the Pacific through a broad, expansive estuary with extensive wetlands. However, the creek's estuarine habitat has suffered degradation through modification of its hydrologic regime (from urbanization of the watershed) and physical modification of the mouth of the creek and its banks. The Aliso Estuary has extremely high restoration value, due to its key geographic location between two regionally significant ecosystem reserve systems: the terrestrial **greenbelt**, comprised of ~15,000 acres of preserved natural habitats in the San Joaquin Hills, and the **bluebelt** of the coastal and offshore Laguna State Marine Reserve recently established through the Marine Life Protection Act.

The principal obstacle to restoration of the Aliso Estuary is lack of a restoration plan. The proposed planning project presented for your consideration will focus on restoring the creek's coastal wetland habitats to support a wide range of fish and wildlife, including listed species such as the Tidewater Goby. The project will be driven by a consensus process involving local landowners, local agencies and other stakeholders, guided by the expertise of skilled restoration ecologists. The ultimate goal is a plan with strong local support that is well-positioned for implementation.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of the Aliso Estuary Restoration Planning project.

Sincerely,



Jeff Opdycke
Associate Director
Conservation Partnership Development
San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research
15600 San Pasqual Valley Road
Escondido, CA 92027-7000
Office: 760/796-5602
jopdycke@sandiegozoo.org



Douglas Bosco, Chair
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: Aliso Creek Estuary Restoration Planning
Letter of Support

Dear Mr. Bosco:

The South Laguna Civic Association has represented citizens in South Laguna since 1946. We are considered key stakeholders in the Aliso Canyon and Aliso Estuary area by the County of Orange, Army Corps of Engineers, South Orange County Wastewater Authority and various State agencies. For over 50 years, we have provided detailed input and offered sustainable alternatives to the many projects proposed for this unique semi-arid area.

We write in support of the Laguna Ocean Foundation proposal submitted by Ed Almanza to develop a feasibility concept plan to restore the mouth of Aliso Creek to a healthy and fully functional estuary. We support this project and believe it is necessary to restore the Aliso Creek estuary with the participation of the public.

In recent decades, Aliso Creek's lagoon and estuarine habitat has suffered degradation from urbanization of the watershed and physical modification of the mouth of the creek and its banks. The Aliso Estuary has extremely high restoration value, due to its key geographic location between two regionally significant ecosystem reserve systems which includes the 15,000 acre terrestrial Greenbelt and the Bluebelt of the coastal and offshore Laguna Beach State Marine Reserve recently established through the Marine Life Protection Act.

Importantly, the principal obstacle to restoration of the Aliso Estuary has been the absence of an integrated restoration plan. This proposed planning project addresses this deficiency and will focus on restoring the creek's coastal wetland habitats to support a wide range of fish and wildlife, including listed species such as the Tidewater Goby.

We applaud the multiple community benefits associated with wetland recovery projects that include improved beach ocean water quality, less beach sand erosion, and protection of near shore tidepool and kelp habitats. The project, driven by a consensus process involving local landowners, local agencies and other stakeholders, and guided by skilled restoration ecologists, promises a plan with strong local support that is well-positioned for implementation.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of the Aliso Estuary Restoration Planning project. We look forward to working together to restore this important coastal wetlands along the Laguna Bluebelt.

Sincerely,

Greg O'Loughlin, President, South Laguna Civic Association
cc: Deborah Ruddock druddock@scc.ca.gov.