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Subject: Request: Ballona update during Executive Officer Report
Date: Thursday, September 7, 2023 10:28:00 AM

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Good morning, Amy.

The extent to which the Conservancy has become increasingly unresponsive and unaccountable with regard to its funding of the Ballona Wetlands Restoration Project is quite troubling. When the Conservancy allocated an additional \$1.5 million for the project in September of 2007, the [staff report](#) stated that "[s]taff expects that final planning, environmental review and permitting for the restoration of the site will take approximately three years." Sixteen years later, there is not even a valid draft EIR, and there are no indications that CDFW is even pursuing a final EIS at this point.

After 18 years and \$15 million in planning, the public deserves a candid and detailed update about the status of this project. What is the estimated budget and timeline to begin and *to complete* the project and what is the roadmap for doing so? These questions have important ramifications for issues such as resiliency to sea level rise and equitable public access to the reserve. Further, if CDFW has effectively abandoned most of the project, which we understand to be the case via reliable sources, then the public deserves to know that so that discussion can shift to other approaches for improving ecological conditions at the reserve.

There has not been any staff or board discussion of this project since March of 2022, almost 18 months ago. A mere two sentences were added to the Conservancy's project update page over a month ago, with four sentences added in June. Does CDFW still "anticipate permit applications for [Sequences 1 and 2] will be submitted by June 2023 and final design and engineering will be completed by February 2024", as the web site asserted in March? What is the status of the application for a Section 408 permit to alter the US Army Corps of Engineers flood control project? What is the status of the tribal engagement report [see end of staff [memorandum](#)] that was to be delivered by Cogstone and SCC staff this month?

Please provide a candid and detailed update on the Ballona Wetlands during your Executive Officer Report (agenda item 4) at the September 14th meeting of the Conservancy Board.

Thank you.

Walter Lamb
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