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154 Acre Wetlands Restoration Project in Long Beach Takes Critical Step Forward

California State Coastal Conservancy approves Land Exchange Agreement to transition 154 acres of private oil fields to publicly accessible coastal wetlands

LONG BEACH, CA – Councilmember Kristina Duggan, Chair of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority, proudly announces the approval of a pivotal [land exchange agreement](#) by the California State Coastal Conservancy on February 16 to restore over 150 acres of coastal wetlands in Long Beach. This landmark agreement, involving an exchange of a five acre parcel owned by the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority with a 150 acre parcel from Los Cerritos Wetlands LLC, marks a significant step forward in the restoration and protection of the Los Cerritos Wetlands.

“Over the past year, we rolled up our sleeves to come to terms on a deal that transitions 154 acres of private oil fields to beautiful coastal wetlands that can be enjoyed by everyone,” said Councilmember Kristina Duggan. “This historic occasion not only decommissions oil wells on the site over 15 years earlier than anticipated, but it also serves as a key milestone in our City's transition away from oil drilling and I am proud to lead this effort.”

“Today’s action is a major step towards the LCWA’s ability to restore the wetlands and bring back a coastal and community benefit to the area [Long Beach],” said Mark Stanley, Executive Officer of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority.

The project aims to create a sustainable and vibrant ecosystem, incorporating educational and recreational opportunities for the community. With the addition of trails, a visitor center, and other amenities, the restored wetlands will become a destination for nature enthusiasts, students, and families alike. The project also aligns with Long Beach’s broader environmental goals, marking a departure from the city's historical reliance on oil production and moving towards a future focused on conservation and public access to natural spaces.

“This approval will help facilitate a public/private partnership necessary for the restoration of over 150 acres of Upper Los Cerritos Wetlands in Long Beach,” said John McKeown, Project CEO of Los Cerritos Wetlands LLC. “We look forward to moving forward with this project and are excited to have partnered with the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority to be long-term stewards of the property.”

“We’re encouraged with the Coastal Conservancy approval of the land exchange. It will help reconnect and restore the area’s natural wetlands and allow public access to a site which has been closed to the public for decades,” said Peter Zak, Project Principal of Los Cerritos Wetlands LLC.

The Land Exchange Agreement still requires additional approvals from the California State Department of General Services and the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority Board of Directors.



Pictured from left to right: Sally Gee, Project Manager - South Coast, State Coastal Conservancy; Nick Kaspar, Chief of Staff to Councilmember Duggan; Councilmember Kristina Duggan, Chair of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority; Peter Zak, Principal of Los Cerritos Wetlands LLC; John McKeown, CEO of Los Cerritos Wetlands LLC; Mark Stanley, Executive Officer, San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy & Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority

About the Los Cerritos Wetlands

The Los Cerritos Wetlands, in the East Long Beach and North Seal Beach area, straddles the border of Los Angeles County and Orange County in southern California. The conservation area of Los Cerritos Wetlands as identified by the LCWA comprises approximately 500 acres on both sides of the San Gabriel River. The LCWA is a joint powers authority made up of the State Coastal Conservancy, the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the cities of Long Beach and Seal Beach and currently owns approximately 170 acres of Los Cerritos Wetlands.

About the Office of Councilmember Kristina Duggan

Elected in November 2022 to serve the residents of the 3rd District in Long Beach, Kristina is driven by her passion for community service, education, public safety, and the vitality of the local business community. As a Councilmember, Kristina is working to address issues most impacting the residents of the 3rd District: infrastructure, homelessness & public safety, and environmental concerns.

Kristina has been a proud resident living and working in the 3rd District of Long Beach for over 24 years. Kristina co-owns and operates Dr. Duggan & Associates, a successful local behavioral health center in the Belmont Heights area of Long Beach.

Currently, she and her husband, Matt, live in Belmont Shore with their daughter Shannon, who is currently attending the University of Hawaii, Manoa, and their son, Matthew, a high school junior and hockey player.

About the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority

The Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority's purpose is to provide for a comprehensive program of acquisition, protection, conservation, restoration, maintenance and operation and environmental enhancement of the Los Cerritos Wetlands area consistent with the goals of flood protection, habitat protection and restoration, and improved water supply, water quality, groundwater recharge, and water conservation.

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