

Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission Meeting April 19, 2018

Comments and Responses on Agenda Item 3b - Work Plan (All Comments are from Mr. Walter Lamb, Ballona Wetlands Land Trust)

Comment	Response
<p>1) Structure: The notion that the Management Committee of the SMBNEP lacks management authority over SMBNEP staff participation in SMBNEP work plan activities is legally and structurally unsound. The California Legislature created SMBRC in 2002 in order to consolidate oversight of restoration activities for Santa Monica Bay and its watershed into a single, locally-based state agency, not to further fragment and silo oversight responsibilities into multiple public and private entities . The work plan should specify that the SMBRC Governing Board is the Management Committee of the SMBNEP and, as such, has some level of interest and some degree of oversight in every project listed in the SMBNEP work plan for which SMBNEP staff have a role, even if that role is not a lead role and regardless of which SMBNEP entity is providing the applicable SMBNEP staff. The language below would be one way to accomplish this clarification.</p> <p><i>"The Governing Board of the SMBRC serves as the Management Committee of the Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program and the policy making body of the SMBRC. In that capacity, the Governing Board has the authority to monitor and evaluate the work of SMBNEP staff relating to projects listed in the SMBNEP Work Plan and Bay Restoration Plan and to provide binding direction to SMBNEP staff relating to activity on those projects to further the mission of the SMBNEP."</i></p> <p>[Note: without some good faith modification to current draft of the work plan to address this legal concern, the Land Trust will almost certainly challenge the validity of the work plan in court. If the work plan is deemed legally invalid because it formalizes a structure that thwarts the intent of the Legislature, that would affect EPA funding to TBF]</p>	<p>The enabling legislation of the SMBRC reads as follows: "CALIFORNIA PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTIONS 30988-30988.3 30988.(d) It is the intent of the Legislature that the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission be a nonregulatory, locally based state government entity that will monitor, assess, coordinate, and advise all state programs, and oversee funding that affects the beneficial uses, restoration, and enhancement of Santa Monica Bay and its watershed." The SMBRC is one of the partner entities under the Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program. The main role and function of the SMBRC is coordinating activities of federal, state, local, and other entities to restore and enhance the Santa Monica Bay. To fulfill its roles and functions, the SMBRC develops and adopts an annual work plan jointly with other SMBNEP partners that lays out tasks and activities to be carried out on annual basis. Statements by Mr. Lamb also addresses the structure of the SMBNEP in context to the annual work plan. The structure of the SMBNEP is to be considered as part of the ongoing BRP process.</p>
<p>2) Since the SMBNEP is not an entity in and of itself, and therefore cannot serve the purpose of coordinating multiple implementing entities, the diagram depicted in Figure 1 on page 2 (shown below) should be modified to show that SMBRC is the entity responsible for coordinating the SMBNEP related activity of all SMBNEP entities, as clearly intended by SMBRC's enabling legislation.</p>	<p>The structure of the SMBNEP is to be considered as part of the ongoing BRP revision process. We agree with Mr. Lamb that in order to be consistent with the BRP process (i.e. structure consideration of the</p>

<p>Current Diagram: (see attached graph #1 below) Potential starting point for alternative diagram accurately depicting central role of SMBRC in the SMBNEP: (see attached graph #2 below)</p>	<p>SMBNEP), the diagram in the draft work plan will be removed.</p>
<p>3) Coastal Research Institute: The draft FY 2019 work plan introduces a fourth SMBNEP implementing entity (CRI) without any explanation as to who made the decision to add a new implementing entity and for what specific reasons. Adding yet another entity to an already complex structure without clear lines of accountability runs counter to the report by the California Environmental Protection Agency to the California Legislature which served as the basis for creating the SMBRC and which stressed the importance of a single lead agency to "monitor, assess, or coordinate state programs affecting the beneficial uses, restoration, and enhancement of the Santa Monica Bay." The work plan should explain the decision making process that led to the proposed addition of CRI to the SMBNEP and explain how CRI will be accountable to the SMBRC Governing Board for the work it performs on behalf of the SMBNEP.</p>	<p>We agree with Mr. Lamb that it is preemptive in the context of the ongoing BRP revision process to add CRI within the existing structure of the SMBNEP in the FY19 Work Plan. References to CRI as existing within the current SMBNEP structure will be removed from the document.</p>
<p>4) SMBRC Staff: The "Meet the Staff" page of the SMBRC web site lists three Bay Foundation employees as holding official SMBRC staff positions, but those individuals are not identified as SMBRC staff under the applicable section in the draft FY 2019 work plan. The web site and work plan should be consistent to avoid confusion.</p>	<p>The SMBRC staff page reflects staff identified in the FY18 Work Plan supporting the activities of the SMBRC. The FY19 Work Plan, if approved, starts on October 1, 2018. Adjustments to the SMBRC staff page will be consistent with the FY19 staffing as described in the work plan if approved and effective October 1, 2018.</p>
<p>5) Community Wetland Restoration:</p> <p>a) The work plan should explain the apparent 15% drop in the reported size of the initial iceplant removal project area.</p> <p>From FY 2018 work plan (pg 27):</p> <p>"In total, 0.88 acres were initially restored from September to December 2016."</p> <p>From draft FY 2019 work plan (pg 19):</p>	<p>TBF clarified the difference in the exact aerial project footprint and the implementation area in the July 2017 annual report for the project (publicly available):</p> <p>"Hand restoration efforts alone resulted in a restoration area of 0.39 acres (1,585 m2), and the total tarped restoration area was 0.36 acres (1,460 m2) for a total project footprint of 0.75 acres. Additionally, some of the tarped area also had to be hand-restored through additional restoration</p>

<p>"In total, 0.75 acres were initially restored from September to December 2016 ... "</p>	<p>events in an area of 0.13 acres or 510 m2. Collectively, restoration efforts comprised a total area of 0.88 acres (3,555 m2), which included the portion of Site 1 that was subsequently hand-restored after tarps were removed and some of the iceplant remained. The total aerial extent ("footprint") of the restoration area covers 0.75 acres (3,035 m2) within the 3-acre permitted proposed restoration area."</p>
<p>5b) The work plan should provide a current assessment of the project site, which is once again largely overrun with numerous species of invasive vegetation. The work plan should assure the public that no areas will be disturbed until the existing project footprint is stabilized to a reasonable degree with native vegetation. This is consistent with a May 2017 memorandum from the Bay Foundation to the California Coastal Commission stating that "If time and resources allow, expansion out of the 0.88 acre area will occur only after non-native vegetation has been removed from this area." The work plan should also indicate that the Governing Board will be consulted prior to any expansion of the site, to facilitate a discussion on invasive species management which has been proposed on several occasions but which does not appear to have taken place.</p>	<p>The iceplant removal and community-based restoration project at the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve produces a public annual report, based on permit requirements to the California Coastal Commission via CDP No. 5-15-1427. The last report contains the most accurate and up-to-date public information about the project and was submitted in July 2017. It states: "Non-native vegetation removal efforts will be focused on the restoration footprint of Year 1 first, and if time and resources allow, expand out of the Year 1 footprint. Additionally, TBF will not be deploying tarps to solarize iceplant during Year 2 activities. Re-vegetation protocols will continue to be considered as monitoring progresses and after Year 2 restoration activities have been completed. Volunteer participants during Year 2 restoration events will be given a thorough briefing on non-native plants being targeted during the event and will be guided by TBF staff on removal techniques." More details are available in the report on TBF's website.</p>
<p>5c) The work plan should provide more detail about plans to implement revegetation protocols on the existing project site and whether any of the \$9,000 of US EPA Section 320 funds allocated to the project in the budget summary will be spent on</p>	<p>Noted, thank you for the comment. The level of detail is consistent with USEPA Clean Water Act</p>

<p>plantings or seeding, or whether that money will all be spent on staff time for the project.</p>	<p>Section 320 National Estuary Program funding guidance and other federal requirements.</p>
<p>9) Ballona Wetlands Outreach: The FY 2018 work plan (pg 28) included a task for public outreach for the Ballona Wetlands that included distributing electronic newsletters, updating the project web site and using social media. However, the last project newsletter appears to have been distributed in spring of 2016, the last update to the project's Facebook page was in November of 2017, and the timeline posted on the project web site is out of date. For the FY 2019 work plan (pg 47), this outreach task was combined with a general support task for the wetlands. The work plan should explain why the project newsletters were discontinued and why the web site and social media are updated so sporadically.</p>	<p>Noted, thank you for the comment. The level of detail is consistent with USEPA Clean Water Act Section 320 National Estuary Program funding guidance and other federal requirements.</p>
<p>10) Ballona Wetlands Goals: The work plan (pg 56) lists as a long term goal to "encourage recreation and stewardship at the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve" and this should also be listed as a short term goal given that recreational and stewardship programs are currently being conducted in the wetlands on a limited basis and those programs can be expanded and enhanced prior to implementation of a large-scale earth-moving restoration. As noted below, the SMBRC is currently considering the allocation of substantial funds, and recognizing interim stewardship of the Ballona Wetlands in the work plan would help support allocation of funds for that purpose.</p>	<p>We agree with Mr. Lamb; the long-term "outcome" (or environmental result) referred to as "the encouragement of recreation and stewardship at the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve" within Appendix B should also be a short-term "outcome" (or environmental result). Appendix B will be updated accordingly.</p>
<p>11) Office space: Pursuant to the settlement agreement between SMBRC and the Land Trust, the work plan should include a statement "affirming that the office space provided by SWRCB to SMBRC has been used solely to perform tasks of the SMBNEP as defined by the Bay Restoration Plan and Annual Work Plans."</p>	<p>This is no longer needed because there is no longer any office space provided by State Board to house SMBNEP staff other than the state employees assigned to the SMBRC.</p>
<p>12) Budget: The work plan (pg 41 and 42) should provide additional detail regarding the line items for SMBNEP Outreach (\$45,000) and Subcontracts (\$96,000). Additionally, the work plan should clarify that the budget set forth in the work plan is a subset of TBF's overall budget, and that some sources of funds, total salary amounts and other budgetary information about the SMBNEP is not included in the work plan.</p>	<p>Noted, thank you for the comment. The level of detail provided in the budget is consistent with USEPA Clean Water Act Section 320 National Estuary Program funding guidance and other federal requirements.</p>
<p>13) SMBRA: The work plan (pg 1) states that "[t]he purpose of SMBRA is to broaden funding opportunities for projects within the Santa Monica Bay Watershed, and it provides an efficient method by which state agencies can fund important programs of the SMBNEP." Given that state agencies also fund SMBNEP programs via direct grants to TBF, it is unclear what criteria is used to determine whether funds will be</p>	<p>Grants awarded by state agencies have different recipient eligibility criteria based on the sources of funding and enabling state legislation. Grants awarded to the SMBRA were evaluated based on</p>

<p>routed through SMBRA or provided directly to TBF. The work plan should clarify this for the public.</p>	<p>project’s merit and mutual benefits to the SMBRA entities, with approval by the SMBRA Board.</p>
<p>14) Grant Award Process: We've articulated our position to SMBRC's legal counsel through our legal counsel as to what we consider to be SMBRC's obligation to review and recommend specific projects as a prerequisite for Coastal Conservancy funding. Consistent with the Memorandum of Agreement with TBF, we believe that "The Commission, through its Governing Board, makes recommendations to other state, federal, and local agencies to provide grants to entities to carry out activities to implement the Bay Restoration Plan. The Governing Board selects projects that may be funded through state bond programs (such as Propositions 12, 50, and 84) and makes recommendations to the actual funding agencies regarding those projects."</p> <p>[Note: without some modification to the grant award process as currently drafted, the Land Trust will very likely challenge the process, which could delay the Coastal Conservancy from disbursing these funds until a legally compliant process is established]</p>	<p>Proposition 12 allocated to the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) \$25 million specifically designated for restoration of Santa Monica Bay (SMB). Prop 12 provides for SCC to use the SMB funds for “grants to public agencies and non-profits to implement storm water and urban runoff pollution prevention programs, habitat restoration, and other priority actions specified in the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Plan.” (Public Resources Code § 5096.352(b).) Meanwhile, the language of the Prop. 12 and existing statute and regulations do not preclude the Governing Board from delegating authority to recommend project proposals to Commission staff.</p>
<p>15) Funding for the Ballona Wetlands: Even if SMBRC believes it can minimally satisfy the prop 12 language by merely establishing generic eligibility and priority criteria, the Governing Board still has the authority to set aside some portion of the funds for interim stewardship activities at the Ballona Wetlands. Prop 12 funds from a different but related prop 12 line item have been used for ranger patrols, education, access improvements, trash removal and native species re-vegetation efforts. It is very important that the Governing Board members be accurately informed of any restrictions on the use of these funds, and on their authority to prioritize some portion of the funds for interim stewardship of the Ballona Wetlands.</p>	<p>At the April 19, 2018 meeting of the Governing Board of the SMBRC, the Board will be asked only to approve a process for recommending grants to the State Coastal Conservancy to restore and protect the Santa Monica Bay, including potential projects at Ballona Wetlands. No specific projects will be recommended at the meeting. If the Board approves the process, the SMBRC and the SCC hope to begin soliciting project proposals in May, 2018.</p>
<p>16) The current and revised MOA both state that "The Foundation Board of Directors is ... diverse and comprised of community members, local government and agency representatives." That does not appear to be accurate as there are no representatives of any government agencies on the TBF Board of Directors.</p>	<p>This comment is not specifically related to the context of the work plan. SMBRC staff acknowledge that update and modifications are needed for the MOA between the SMBRC and TBF (in addition to adoption of the proposed amendment at the April 19, 2018 Governing Board meeting). These needs will be considered and addressed as part of the ongoing BRP revision process.</p>

<p>17) The current and revised MOA both state that "[t]he Foundation provides staff, and administrative services to the Commission ..." Similar to the work plan comment above, any SMBRC staff provided by TBF should be listed in the work plan with their SMBRC duties outlined separately from their TBF duties.</p>	<p>See response above.</p>
<p>18) The current and revised MOA both state that "state law also created in the state treasury the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Account and authorized moneys in the account to be expended, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to support the activities of the Commission." It appears that this account may have been terminated in 2012 due to inactivity. (http://dof.ca.gov/Budget/Manual_State_Funds/Find_a_Fund/documents/6035a.pdf) If so, the MOA and other documents should be reflected to clarify this.</p>	<p>Staff did not find evidence of the account termination from the weblink provided, but will continue look into the status of the account.</p>

Graph #1

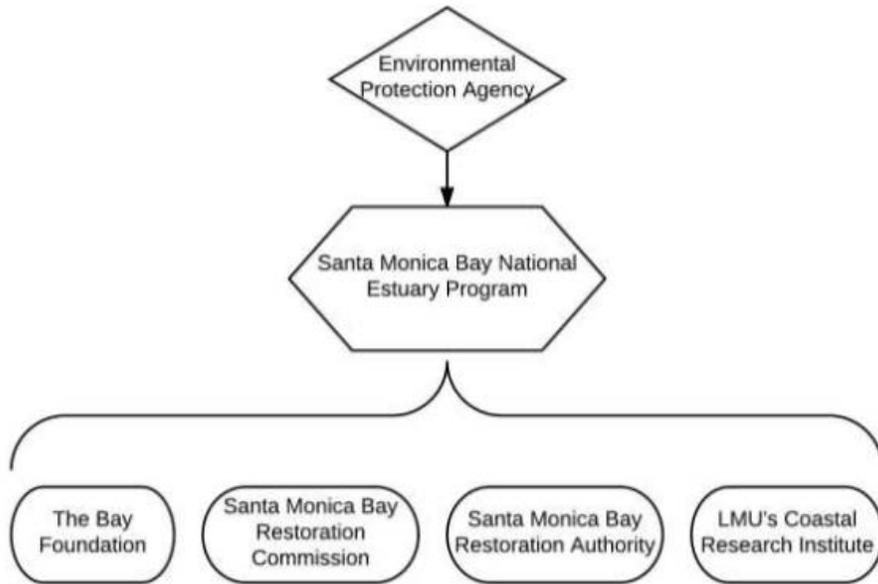
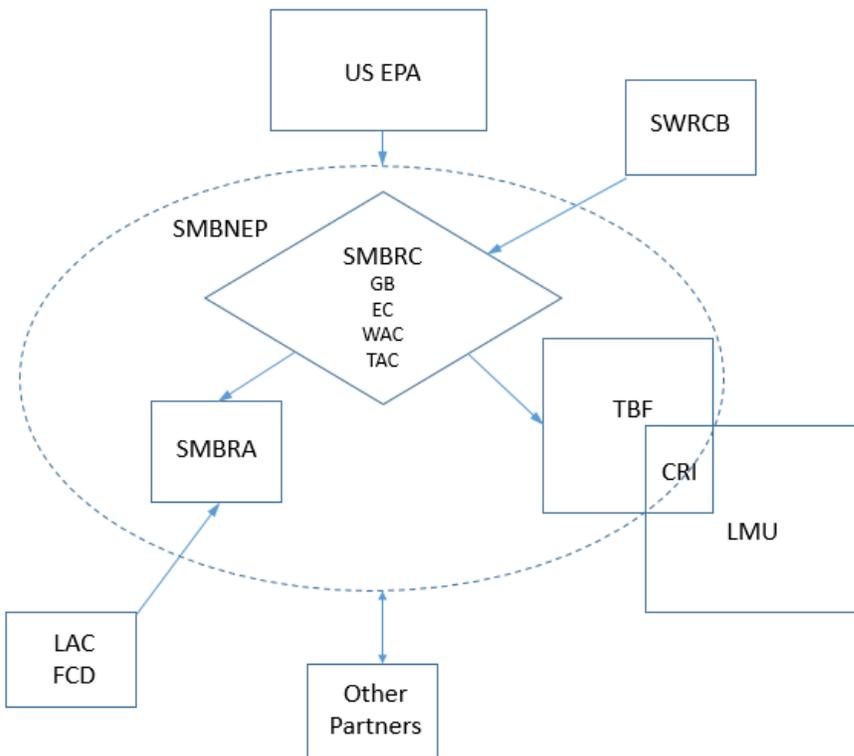


Figure 1. Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program structure for FY19 Work Plan.

Graph #2



Comments and Response on Agenda Item 3c-Proposition 12 Grant Award Process		
Name	Comment	Response
Jo Ellen Young joellen@youngcanine.com Home 310-839-3691	The Ballona Wetlands are very important to me, and I have been actively supporting them for decades. We must protect the wildlife in these wetlands. Please take a more active role in the restoration planning process and to ensure adequate funding for interim stewardship of this very special natural resource.	Thank you for your comments. At the April 19,2018 meeting of the Governing Board of the SMBRC, the Board will be asked only to approve a process for recommending projects to the State Coastal Conservancy to restore and protect the Santa Monica Bay, including, but not limited to, potential projects at Ballona Wetlands. No projects will be recommended at the meeting. If the Board approves the process, the State Coastal Conservancy and SMBRC hope to begin soliciting project proposals in May, 2018.
Joel Reynolds Western Director Senior Attorney Natural Resources Defense Council 1314 Second Street Santa Monica, CA 90401 (310) 434-2300 (310) 434-2399 (fax)	Dear Mr. Topel – There are no spaces on the coast of Los Angeles more important than the Ballona Wetlands, which have been the focus of intensive development pressure and relentless environmental defense for decades. In your consideration of Prop 12 work plan funding, I write to urge you to allocate significant funding to the urgent needs of the Ecological Reserve, whatever they may be. We can't afford to let the Reserve deteriorate slowly over time from neglect or any other cause. Your oversight and allocation of funding is an important opportunity to make sure this never happens. Thank you for your consideration of my comments.	Please note, the SMBRC does not have the authority to approve any project. Nor does the SMBRC have funds to allocate or expend. The State Coastal Conservancy is the agency that authorizes, allocates, and approves the expenditure of Proposition 12 funds to implement the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Plan.
Leslie Belsma Retired Air Force Meteorologist/Aerospace Corp	I've witnessed the whittling away of the open lands around Ballona Creek for years. So little remains, yet it's so critical for ecosystems to preserve the few wetlands that are left. It's disappointing to learn that funds earmarked for the wetlands may expire due to lack of action. I know the wheels of government turn slowly...I work in DoD...but I understand there are near term projects that could get underway quickly with these funds. Please take the initiative and make it happen.	
Sabine Schlosser & John Cobus	Dear Commissioner, I am writing to ask your careful consideration of Prop 12 funding for the interim stewardship and restoration of the most precious Ballona Wetlands. These are critical times for our environment. Your positive engagement will be urgently important to the long-term preservation of such a significantly vital part of our eco-system. You must be the champion for the plants and animals that have no other voice. Our own survival depends on theirs. Thank you for your time and commitment.	

<p>Carol Landsberg</p>	<p>As a resident of Santa Monica for many years, I have watched the demise of most of the Ballona Wetlands and the consequences thereof. What is left of it is one of the very last natural resources of its kind. Monies held in reserve for the Ballona Wetlands have not been utilized as initially intended - to be spent on the proposed, large-scale restoration project.</p> <p>Please take a more active role in what is to be the restoration planning process to make sure that some of the available funds are used for the desperately needed interim management projects, such as trash removal, careful re-establishment of native species driven out by projects there, and the critical aspect of providing sensitively designed access to the school children and residents so they will be able to learn about, experience, and develop an appreciation for ecology and nature. This is especially important in this sprawling, brick and mortar metropolis.</p>	
<p>Meyera Robbins Meyera@mac.com</p>	<p>Wetlands are important for so many reasons, but to me the most important is that wetlands support an ecological system that supports wildlife and draws the intensity of hurricanes and tsunamis in order to cool them down.</p> <p>Even Mississippi understands this concept. NOTHING should be destroyed on wetlands. Restoring the wetlands (if you still can) would be a major step towards respecting a piece of our earth.</p>	
<p>The Orosz Family</p>	<p>In regards to the \$6.8 million dollars in Proposition 12 public bond funds that have been held in reserve for the Ballona Wetlands for many years and will expire soon, here are some thoughts as to how the money can and should be spent right now:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Removal of trash (including human excrement and hypodermic needles) 2. Thoughtful re-establishment of native species 3. Safety - Secure the premises from trespassers especially our unfortunate homeless population. <p>As a local resident and regular jogger around the wetlands, it is truly sad to see how this wonderful ecological life raft has now been overtaken by our unfortunate and underserved mentally ill homeless population.</p>	

	<p>These fellow human beings have looked for solace in the wetlands and unfortunately have used the wetlands privacy to continue dangerous and deadly bad habits. These include prostitution, open fires and heavy drug use (including hypodermic needles that are regularly found in the area). These issues don't just remain "inside" the wetlands.</p> <p>Instead, these issues spill into our community and affect innocent bystanders. For example, one parent at our children's elementary school was biking on the Ballona Creek bike path during the day when a high homeless group decided to randomly throw their old bike down the hill (from the Wetlands) for unknown reason. This hard working innocent father of two little children was hit while riding, crashed and broke his arm. According to his report, the group of homeless were clearly high on drugs or alcohol and found the incident very amusing. He was lucky to leave with "just" a broken arm.</p> <p>The gates and fences to the wetland are cut and pulled back regularly, in part because the homeless camps are will stock with bolt cutters to steal bikes.</p> <p>There is a rampant illegal stolen bike trade going on simultaneously. The gates either need to be improved and/or repairs and monitoring need to be increased significantly.</p> <p>The hope of our community is that these very scarce funds be used wisely and urgently to help better the situation right now so that the Wetland survives and prospers in the long term future.</p>	
Andrew Wilder	<p>The Ballona Wetlands are a critical natural resources in the Los Angeles basin, and need and deseve much more support than they're currently getting. Please take an active role in the restoration planning of the wetlands, and ensure adequate funding for stewardship of this land!</p>	
Howard & Elaine Sacks, Playa del Rey	<p>The Ballona Wetlands are very important to myself and family who have lived in Playa del Rey and El Segundo since 1968, because they are important to keep open space and preserve the wetlands and the species of animals that live there which will be destroyed unless very careful efforts to preserve and restore them.</p>	

	<p>The Ballona Wetlands already have had serious degradation and destruction. You have the resources to stop that from getting worse.</p> <p>The available funds can be spent, or a substantial amount of them must be spent, to improve conditions at the ecological reserve for such things as trash removal, establishment of native species and ecologically sensitive access for nature education and appreciation.</p> <p>I want to remind the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission of your oversight role in this very important ecosystem which is a high priority resources in your Bay Restoration Plan.</p>	
<p>Muriel S. Kotin Malibu 310.457-5796 (h)</p>	<p>I am writing to ask that Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission take a more active role in the Ballona Wetlands restoration planning process and ensure adequate funding for interim stewardship of this very special natural resource.</p> <p>I have lead nature walks at Malibu Lagoon for almost 30 years and realize how important it is to preserve and restore the tiny percentage of remaining coastal wetlands. Restoring Ballona Wetlands to function as a healthy wetlands should be a major priority!</p>	
<p>Heidi Ziegler 312 Avenue F 90277</p>	<p>The Ballona Wetlands is a unique ecosystem that provides the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A rest stop and fueling source for birds. A nursery for young fish. A water filtration system. Groundwater recharge. A flood buffer for local communities. A valuable educational resource and opportunity for community activity. <p>Home for many plants and animals the Ballona Wetlands are the only place in the vast urban spread of Los Angeles in which they can survive.</p> <p>A source of pride and beauty, and a place for people to rejuvenate.</p> <p>An air purifier and fresh air producer Vital and abundant base of the food chain.</p> <p>As funds are still available for disposition, please consider spending them on desperately needed interim management projects to improve current conditions at the ecological reserve (e.g. removal of trash, thoughtful</p>	

	<p>re-establishment of native species, culturally and ecologically sensitive access for nature education/appreciation).</p> <p>Please, as the Commission, take a more active role in the restoration planning process and ensure adequate funding for interim stewardship of this very special natural resource.</p>	
<p>Jen and Mike Sorg Venice, CA</p>	<p>Balloon Wetlands is a CRITICAL stop over for birds on the Pacific flyway. My husband and I went for a walk along Ballona Lagoon this week and were reminded by the signs that birds are under tremendous habitat pressure which threatens their very existence. We need to protect the environment and food supply Ballona Wetlands provides for the thousands of birds passing through and all the micro life that live on the ground there now. We need to release funding for maintenance of the area.</p>	
<p>Sharon Diane King, Ph.D. Associate, UCLA CMRS</p>	<p>I write to you in regards to the Ballona Wetlands, an area that is critically important to the vanishing wild ecosystems of southern California.</p> <p>I ask for your environmental and financial oversight in the care of this area, which needs a plan that maintains the integrity of the plants and animals that already thrive there.</p> <p>Environmentally responsible actions for which you might allocate funds include gentle removal of polluting trash, and a well-conceived, gradual re-establishment of some native species. The Ballona already fosters all kinds of native plants and animals, and provides an important locus for migratory birds.</p> <p>This area is our heritage, and natural areas--even ones impinged upon by development--are of vital importance to our history, our culture, and our future.</p> <p>I urge you to increase your role in the restoration planning process of this area, and to provide for adequate funding for interim stewardship of this unique natural resource in Los Angeles.</p>	

David Dichner, CPA, ABV
7514 Whitlock Ave.
Playa del Rey, CA 90293

Cell: 310-874-2997

I urge you to apply and authorize expenditure of Proposition 12 funds to assist in the restoration of Ballona Wetlands. There are several low tech and relatively low cost projects that can aid in restoring and/or stopping further deterioration of the wetland. I understand there are some controversial large scale approaches that have been proposed-- Some involve more destruction before restoration, to which my gut reaction is negative. (the Audubon Society project was discarded, thankfully—non-wetlands aims that were good in themselves, but destroying wetlands to achieve)

Until major and more complete restoration can be agreed upon, lets not let things get worse. Lets improve what we can. Removing trash, re-establishing native species, improving water flow, improving the environment for those critters that do live there now, low impact public education come to mind.

Note: I moved into Culver City at age 5, living one block from “the creek”. I actually saw fish in there near Overland (3 miles inland, before the sides were concrete!) where I lived, and caught tadpoles in tin cans regularly. I fished off the bridge near the west end of the Ballona Creek starting at age 7. I remember the occasional Barracuda runs –actually catching Barracuda from Santa Monica Pier a couple of years. That was the 50’s. People actually made a living catching fish in boats in the SM Bay!! I caught Bonito in the Marina when it was first built (before the water filled with boats and fuel)

We are not going to get back to all that. But lets do what we can. To the extent the Wetlands can be somewhat restored, its the right thing to do. That Wetland used to be the starting point of a whole chain of food supply and young fish fry getting their start in life. And bird life, and from what I understand, a help to birds on their long migrations. Do what you can.

Laura Emberson
www.linkedin.com/in/lauraemberson

Dear Mr. Topel,

I am writing today about the Ballon Wetlands funding that is expiring at the end of this fiscal year.

The wetlands are a community asset. They not only are a wildlife refuge for many wetland species, but also have the potential to impact social wellbeing through engagement with nature. The wetlands benefit birders, youth education, and land stewardship programs. Wetlands also play a vital ecosystem role in risk mitigation, reducing flood potential in surrounding residential areas and buffer sensitive coastal ecosystems from hydrocarbon pollution flowing off our streets.

I used to work protecting these wetlands, but now work for the federal government so I know how restrictive spending of funding may be. However, if your office is anything like mine, when September comes, the only thing on people's minds is obligating every last bit. The commission may not be able to spend the total \$6.8 million on the wetlands, but I urge you to put whatever you can toward wetland maintenance. Or if interim dollars need to be allocated for wetland stewardship, vote to make that happen. I urge you to get creative while obligating, so these wetlands get the attention and care they need to function.

This interim care also safeguards the ultimate restoration project from costing the tax payers more money, ensuring wetland quality doesn't dropped past critical levels. You are probably familiar with the concept of state-transition models and what happens when ecosystem thresholds are surpassed. As you know, it is not as simple as returning to the previous set of environmental conditions, but you must push well past them to have a successful restoration. This is much more energy intensive than it would be to maintain current conditions and then improve them (if you or others on the Commission are interested in state-transition models, the classic example to google is eutrophication in lakes).

	<p>The Wetlands are degraded, yes, but we cannot wait until the restoration begins for Ballona to be at the forefront of our minds. There are plants, water, and animals in your district reliant on your help. And there are people in your district counting on you. Please do whatever you can.</p> <p>Thank you so much for your public service!</p> <p>And please share my comments with the rest of the SMBRC members.</p>	
Susan Polka	<p>I am aware next week, the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission will discuss how \$6.8 million dollars in Proposition 12 public bond funds will be allocated. I am a resident of Westchester, CA. Our community, including the new PlayaVista, enjoy our Ballona Wetlands. One of the few left in southern California. The wetlands remind many residents as well as visitors of why California is so unique. Although a major and thriving metropolitan city, beautiful natural landscapes and outdoor activities are such a part of the California lifestyle. Myself and many residents enjoy the driving past the wetlands, biking and walking on the trails. Upon arrival from LAX, many visitors will see the beautiful wetlands within minutes of their arrival to Los Angeles as they drive from LAX. What a lasting impression this makes on our city.</p> <p>The Commission has a responsibility for the maintaining this important ecosystem. These wetlands are a complex ecosystem and money can and should be spent on desperately needed interim management projects, Some available funds should be spent to improve current conditions at the ecological reserve (e.g. removal of trash, thoughtful re-establishment of native species, culturally and ecologically sensitive access for nature education/appreciation) and carry out important stewardship activities in the wetlands.</p>	
Donna Murray 8734 Wiley Post Ave Los Angeles, CA 90045	<p>I am a retired teacher who has taken many classes to the ecological reserve.</p> <p>My students were amazed at the openness but saddened by the trash. They worked pulling out ice plant and learned about the food chain. They made</p>	

	<p>connections to classroom readings about nature and viewed birds through binoculars.</p> <p>I'm requesting these funds be used for interim management for things like trash removal, re-establishing native plants and more public access to help with these projects so more people will learn more about the ecological reserve.</p> <p>PS - My granddaughter's favorite Saturday activity is visiting the wetlands for Open Wetlands and she wonders on other days why we can't go visit.</p>	
Karen and Jim Ciccone	<p>I understand the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission will discuss how to allocate \$6.8 million dollars in Proposition 12 public bond funds, which had been held in reserve for the Ballona Wetlands. As residents of the Venice Canals, clean water in the bay and in the canals is extremely important to us and presumably anyone who uses the beaches in the area. The Ballona Wetlands provide a natural water filter for storm water runoff, preventing contaminated and trash filled runoff from reaching the ocean water which feeds the canals. We are also concerned about the Ballona Wetlands ecosystem, which was substantially reduced in size by the Playa Vista development - leaving many plant and animal species vulnerable and without habitat. With homeless encampments mushrooming around the city, trash must be methodically removed from the Ballona Wetlands to prevent the area from becoming a dumping site. Please make sure the bond funds are used for restoration and preservation of the Ballona Wetlands.</p>	
Courtney Silver	<p>I am emailing you because of my concern over destruction of the current Ballona Wetlands. The wetlands hold great amount of ecological importance. There is a large amount of biodiversity, a unique habitat structure, and resources for animals as well as people. I am extremely worried that there hasn't been enough thought and review in the plans for the wetlands. I am emailing you to ask the Commission to take a more active role in the restoration planning process and to ensure adequate funding for interim stewardship of this very special natural resource. Without that, I feel that this project will not be as successful, and in fact more damaging, than people realize.</p>	

<p>Randy Grant, EdD 4177 McConnell Bl. Los Angeles, CA 90066</p>	<p>The Ballona Wetlands are one of Southern California's most important environmental assets, and I am writing you to ask that you ensure adequate funding for their stewardship. I live in the Mar Vista community of Los Angeles and regularly ride my bike along Ballona Creek to the coast. The Wetlands play home to local and migratory wildlife, provide key open space in LA's mostly concrete wasteland and offer important educational and recreational opportunities. Currently the Wetlands are endangered from neglect, nearby development, damage from encampments and other threats. Please do all you can to preserve, protect and improve this priceless resource!</p>	
<p>Kathy Knight, Project Manager Ballona Ecosystem Education Project 1122 Oak St., Santa Monica, CA 90405 (310) 450-5961 kathyknight66@gmail.com</p>	<p>FROM: Ballona Ecosystem Education Project RE: Allocation of \$6.8 million of Proposition 12 public bond funds for Work Plan We are requesting that the SMBRC set aside at least some Prop 12 funds for interim stewardship of the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve. There are interim stewardship and education needs that can be addressed with these funds. These type of stewardship and education needs were done on a regular basis before the property was purchased in 2003. There are local environmental groups that could help in these activities, such as removal of trash, thoughtful re-establishment of native species, and culturally and ecologically sensitive access for nature education and appreciation. This Ecological Reserve is an important part of the Bay Restoration Plan of which you have oversight. We ask you to help us maintain this important source of funds for a critical part of the last 5% of our coastal wetlands in California.</p>	
<p>Patrick Davenport COO, Global Advertising MPC 8921 Lindblade Street, Culver City, CA 90232 T 310 526 5850 M +1 310 301 7800</p>	<p>My name is Patrick Davenport and I'm the Global Chief Operating Officer for MPC Advertising. I live in Venice and am based at our studio in Culver City, which has approximately 150 employees. Many of them live on the west side and we use the Bike path daily to cycle to work. I speak for many of us here, together many concerned citizens of Los Angeles, who'd like to see the wetlands restored to its former glory. I've been a supporter of the Ballona Wetlands Land Trust for the last 20 years. The Ballona Wetlands are a</p>	

	<p>critical wildlife habitat and Southern California has lost most of its' wetlands due to development. We have a unique opportunity to restore the wetlands, but it's been years since the land was purchased, there has been little progress in making this happen.</p> <p>I am dismayed that the \$6.8m in the Prop 12 public bonds has not been used for wetland restoration and are about to expire. This money can be spent immediately on interim management projects that are necessary to maintain it's current integrity. There is now so much trash in the area (particularly from the homeless encampments) that could be cleaned up, combined with alien species removal and limited planting of native species.</p> <p>I am respectfully asking that the Commission fulfills their duties of their overseeing role of this important ecosystem, which is a high priority resource in their Bay Restoration Plan.</p>	
<p>Cindy Grant Cindy Grant Architecture, Inc., A.I.A. p: 818-379-9566 c: 310-804-4655 cindy@cindygrant.com</p>	<p>It has come to my attention that \$6.8 million dollars of Prop 12 public bond funds is due to expire before it can be spent on the proposed, large scale Ballona Wetlands restoration project. I am writing to urge you to vote to allocate some of these funds on much needed interim management projects such as education, continuing clean up efforts, establishing areas for viewing, and whatever species restoration that may make sense within the larger scheme.</p> <p>As a former resident of Playa del Rey when I was a graduate student at UCLA, I feel in love with this natural resource and joined in efforts to help preserve it. Even though I live elsewhere in the city now, I have an ongoing vested interest in seeing this area carefully and thoughtfully maintained and restored for my children, and future generations, and most importantly for the species who depend on it, and ask that you take an active role in ensuring that every effort is made to protect and nurture what still remains of this important ecosystem.</p>	
<p>Penny Hutchinson Leisure Travel Specialist Tzell Travel Group West 11111 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 1600</p>	<p>The Interim management projects must be funded. The Ballona Creek area is unique and we have already lost so much of that area to over-building.</p>	

<p>Los Angeles, CA 90025 Phone: 818.788.5419 Email: pbhutch@pacbell.net</p>		
<p>Donna Jensen Playa Vista Resident</p>	<p>Please allocate funds to clean up Homeless Encampments, trash, weeds, etc. Ranger Jewel have been used for Ballona clean-up in the past. I would like to see at least \$800,000 awarded to Ballona Wetlands clean-up and maintenance. This can make quite a difference.</p>	
<p>Lauren Gottlieb, M.S.W.</p>	<p>I'm writing as a stakeholder in the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve (BWER), someone who cares that it is preserved for future generations to enjoy natural habitats, and as a station for endangered birds on the Pacific Flyway. Please do look at ways to steward the BWER for this future (not the dead-end future shown in the expensive DEIR). Proposition 12 funds could and should be set aside for interim stewardship and education in the Reserve. Please use your position to make this right thing happen. We the stakeholders should be having many meetings to plan a better future for the Wetlands. Thank you for your consideration.</p>	
<p>Helen Coyne-Hoerle Attorney at law, retired Master Gardener, UC Cooperative Extension Neighbor of Ballona Wetlands</p>	<p>Please consider the Ballona Wetlands and the urgent need for clean-up and prevention of further degradation when you are allocating the \$6.8million of Proposition 12 funds now available .</p> <p>In past years, but not for a number of years now, funds from this source (\$100K for Ranger Jewel) have been used for Ballona clean-up. As I'm sure you know, there is greater urgency today to clean up homeless encampments, trash, weeds, etc. Even in the past few days, another large homeless encampment is being cleared. Fires have been started in the wetlands by people occupying these homeless encampments.</p> <p>so, it will help if you can attend the Thurs. 19th, 9:30am meeting at Del Rey Yacht Club, end of Palowan, to support funds for Ballona Wetlands</p>	
<p>Patricia McPherson, Grassroots Coalition *Please note: Attachments with various charts and graphs were</p>	<p>Please review the following information which was provided to the list below and others. Ballona's rescue from development has been a long and hard-fought struggle in which we have prevailed. Today, we work</p>	

<p>included with this individual's comments. The attachments will be kept on file, however they did not pertain to either Item 3b or 3c and are not included in the comments or responses.</p>	<p>towards an outcome which has been, thus far, deprived from Ballona— a restoration based upon Ballona's unique freshwater aquifer heritage.</p> <p>In the meantime, through your efforts and participation in the SMBRC, please allow for remaining Prop. 12 funds to be used for purposes of interim education and stewardship programs for Ballona as originally intended—namely to protect and educate the public about the Ecological Reserve.</p> <p>Many long time Ballona organizations have patiently waited to be included in outreach programs as originally promised. This is a time for the inclusion directed by the California Coastal Commission, to become a reality. Now is a time that tried and true stewardship model efforts at other wetland sites can also be shown to help Ballona. We too, have a waiting and willing public to help protect Ballona.</p>	
<p>David W. Kay, D. Env. 13060 Discovery Creek Playa Vista, CA 90094</p>	<p>Please record my support for the Santa Monica Bay Project applying for Proposition 12 funds for the cleanup and management of Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve lands in advance of the proposed Ballona Wetlands Restoration Project.</p>	
<p>Mary Ellen Satterfield 4330 Mclaughlin Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90066</p>	<p>Please earmark some of Prop 12 \$ to help clean up Ballona Wetlands. It's one reason I voted for the proposition.</p>	