



Music from the Mesa

Newsletter 91

Bolsa Chica Land Trust

Spring 2007

SHOWDOWN IN SAN DIEGO POSTPONED! Public Hearing on Upper Wetlands Moved to May

By Julie Bixby



Wetlands experts Dr. Peggy Fiedler and Dr. Lyndon Lee confer with Land Trust board members Karen Merickel and Rudy Vietmeier, and local resident, Mark Bixby, near the Upper Bolsa Chica Wetlands. Unfortunately, their expert testimony was not heard before the Coastal Commission.

For the second time in as many attempts, the City of Huntington Beach and Shea Homes asked for a continuance of the Upper Wetlands public hearing. On the first occasion, in August 2006, the Land Trust received advance warning that such a request would be made, and as a result sent only a skeleton crew to the Coastal Commission's meeting for the official word. This time, at the Commission's February 2007 meeting in San Diego, there was no advance notice, and so the Land Trust came out in full-force to oppose the city's Local Coastal Plan Amendment.

The day started early for several Land Trust board members who drove to the Catamaran Resort Hotel in order to meet with Commissioners before the meeting's 9am starting time. Other board members and supporters took a bus from Huntington Beach and arrived at the hotel in time for lunch. As the Upper Wetlands hearing was the last item on the agenda, we felt we were in for a long wait.

That thinking was shattered at about 2:30 p.m. when the Land Trust received word that the City and Shea would ask for a continuance.

Mary Beth Broeren, a city planner, formally requested the delay. She said, “We’d like to fully understand the implications of this [late] information for the city’s water quality system and for our flood protection system. The city has been very deliberate in its review of this project, and we want to give the implications of the information we received in the two addendums and late communications letter we received from the wetlands group this morning due consideration.”

It is possible that the “wetlands group” letter Broeren was referring to was a lawsuit filed by the Coastal Law Enforcement Action Network (CLEAN) against Shea Homes for illegal fills on the Shea/Parkside property that occurred in 2002 and 2005. This lawsuit was filed February 14th (OC Superior Court case #07CC02895). The illegal fills are also of concern for the Land Trust (in fact Marc Stirdivant was ready to make a presentation on that very issue had the hearing gone on as planned).

The Land Trust, represented by President Jerry Chapman and consultant Dr. Lyndon Lee, asked if conditions could be placed on the postponement request—notably, that the farming activity cease, and that the Land Trust gain regular access to the site for our consultants. The answer was no.

Commissioner Clark made the motion to approve the continuance; Commissioner Achadjian made

the second. Discussion ensued on the motion. Commissioner Wan stated that the public hearing should not be a political decision, it should be based on science, and that “We have plenty of science today.” Due to her comments a roll call vote was conducted. The vote was 9-2, Wan and Burke objecting, to continue the item to the May 9-11 meeting in San Pedro.

Many, many thanks are due to the individuals who went to San Diego, prepared to donate their speaking time so that the Land Trust could make a thorough presentation. Thank you to Jim Anderson, Nancy Donovan, Ted Dowding, Dena Hawes, Marinka Horack, Flossie Horgan, Richard Mathis, Phyllis Maywhort, Karen Merickel, Doug Misterly, Eileen Murphy, Corrine Ramirez, Joe Shaw, Carrie Thomas, Jim Thomas, Rudy Vietmeier, Mary Jane Wiley, and William Wiley.

Note: The CCC meeting was recorded and you can watch or listen to the 15 minute postponement discussion online. Visit the CCC’s website, www.coastal.ca.gov, and click on the link that says “See the video archive page.” Select the playback for February 15. On the video feed, the postponement discussion begins 3:06 into the tape; on the audio-only recording, it starts at 3:12 on the tape.

Julie Bixby is a member of the Board of Directors and Chair of the Upper Wetlands Committee

FLOSSIE HORGAN NAMED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE LAND TRUST

After serving twenty-two months as the Executive Director of the Land Trust, Marc Stirdivant has stepped down to take a position with the City of Glendale. “This was an incredibly difficult decision for me because I love the mission and the people of the Land Trust” said Marc. “But the opportunity to work so close to home was one I could not pass up.”

“We were very pleased to have Marc with us at a time of great accomplishment and important transition,” said Gerald Chapman, President of the Board of Directors. “We have asked him to serve on our Board and are delighted that he has accepted. Marc will continue to work on issues such as the Upper Bolsa Chica Wetlands, as well as help with

the publication of our newsletter.”

Meanwhile, Flossie Horgan has been named the new Executive Director of the Land Trust. “We reviewed a number of applications and resumes for the position,” stated Chapman. “But Flossie was simply head and shoulders above the rest. Her experience in fund-raising, community outreach, and land advocacy is second to none. We are thrilled to have her back at the helm.”

Flossie is a co-founder of the Land Trust, a former member of the Board of Directors, and the Trust’s previous Executive Director. She began work in mid-February.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Gerald Chapman

BOLSA CHICA CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN HUNTINGTON BEACH

Western Alliance for Nature
Amigos de Bolsa Chica
Bolsa Chica Land Trust
present



Conference on Bolsa Chica: The Work Isn't Finished

March 24-25, 2007
Waterfront Hilton
Huntington Beach

The Western Alliance for Nature, the Bolsa Chica Land Trust, and the Amigos de Bolsa Chica are hosting a two day conference on the Bolsa Chica to be held at the Waterfront Hilton in Huntington Beach on March 24, 2007. The proceeds from the conference will be used to establish an endowment fund for the purpose of helping to restore and maintain the entire Bolsa Chica ecosystem.

While the restoration of the wetlands has begun, there still remains much to do, including full restoration of the mesas and future maintenance of the entire ecosystem. The conference will feature Lt. Governor John Garamendi, Assemblymember Fran Pavley, State Senator Tom Harman, Executive Director of the Coastal Commission Peter Douglas, Department of Fish and Game Senior Biologist Terri Stewart, and distinguished wetlands scientists and members of governmental agencies.

The conference is sponsored by many environmental organizations including the Los Angeles Audubon Society, Orange County Coastkeeper, Sea and Sage Audubon, the Surfrider Foundation, Los Angeles and Orange County Sierra

Club., Friends of Harbors, Beaches, and Parks, and the Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust. Tickets for the all-day event are \$150 and include three meals, a reception, entertainment and all lectures, panels and exhibits. On Day Two, there will be several guided tours of Bolsa Chica that are an additional \$25.

We urge you to attend this very important event. Please send in your registration for this event as soon as possible since attendance is limited. PLEASE TURN THE PAGE FOR A COMPLETE REGISTRATION FORM AND CONFERENCE SCHEDULE.

For more information call: the Western Alliance for Nature at (310) 456-0611, Amigos de Bolsa Chica at (714) 840-1575 or the Bolsa Chica Land Trust at (714) 846-1001.

Or visit these web sites:
www.wanconservancy.org
www.amigosdebolsachica.org
www.bolsachicalandtrust.org

REGISTRATION

Register online at www.amigosdebolsachica.org/conference.htm

Pre-Registration: \$150 per person, Seniors: \$100, Students: \$75

Tours: \$25 per person per tour. Space limited to 20 persons per tour.

Registration after March 1, 2007: \$175

Registration fees include continental breakfast, lunch and dinner. Parking at Hilton, \$10/day.

Name(s) _____

Organization _____

Address, City, State, Zip Code _____

E-mail _____ Phone _____

Registering for:

Day One x Number of Persons _____

Day Two Tours x Number of Tours _____

Please specify tours in order of preference:

___ 3-24 Dawn Birding; ___ 3-25 Birding; ___ Photography; ___ Stewards (morning); ___ Fish Walk;

___ Voice of the Marsh; ___ Stewards (afternoon); ___ Behinds the Scenes; ___ Endangered Species

\$ _____ Total enclosed

Method of payment:

Check # _____ Made payable to Western Alliance for Nature. Mail: c/o Amigos de Bolsa Chica, P.O. Box 1563, Huntington Beach, CA 92647

Credit card number: _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature: _____

SPONSORS



Bolsa Chica Conference: The Work Isn't Finished

Day one: March 24th - Waterfront Hilton, Huntington Beach

- 6:00-7:45** Guided birdwatching at Bolsa Chica. Guides: Nick and Mary Freeman, Los Angeles Audubon Society. \$25, tour limited to 20 participants.
- 8:00-9:00** Registration, Casual Coffee/Tea Meet and Greet, Videos of Bolsa Chica
- 9:00-10:00** Opening Remarks: Former Assemblywoman Fran Pavley
Introduction by Western Alliance for Nature, Amigos de Bolsa Chica and the Bolsa Chica Land Trust: the history of the struggle to save Bolsa Chica
- 10:00-11:00** Booth, silent auction and art viewing
- 11:00-12:00** Bolsa Chica: Past Present and Future (biologically speaking)
Speaker: Dr. Victor Leipzig
- 12:00-12:15** Break
- 12:15-1:30** Lunch: Speaker: Lt. Governor John Garamendi
The importance of conservation and the values of land stewardship.
- 1:30-2:00** Break
- 2:00-3:00** The Restoration of Bolsa Chica. What can be done to restore Bolsa Chica to maximum ecosystem functionality and biodiversity. Speaker: Dr. Joy Zedler
- 3:00-3:15** Break
- 3:15-4:15** Panel: The role of Government in ecosystem preservation. Moderator: Sara Wan, Coastal Commissioner; Terri Stewart, CA Dept. Fish & Game; Peter Douglas, Coastal Commission; Sam Schuchat, Coastal Conservancy; Bob Hoffman, NOAA; Jim Trout, CA State Lands Commission
- 4:15-4:30** Break
- 4:30-5:30** Panel: Bolsa Chica and the local economy. Moderator: Shirley Dettloff, founding member Amigos de Bolsa Chica, former Huntington Beach Mayor and Coastal Commissioner; Debbie Cook, Council Member, City of Huntington Beach; Doug Traub, HB Conference and Visitors Bureau; Steve Bone, Robert Mayer Corp.; Amy Hooper, Wild Bird Magazine
- 5:30-6:30** Reception and silent auction
- 6:30-8:30** Dinner. Speaker: State Senator Tom Harman Introduction of the Bolsa Chica Heroes and closing remarks. Entertainment: Acoustic Warrior - John Sotter.

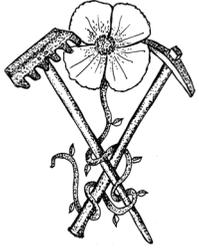
Day two: March 25th - Specialized Tours of Bolsa Chica

Tours limited to 20 persons each; \$25 per person for each tour.

- 7:30-10:00 a.m.** Photography Tour with Larry Wan. Emphasis: How to photograph birds and other wildlife.
- 8-11:00 a.m.** Birding Tour with Sylvia Gallagher (Sea & Sage Audubon). Emphasis: Advanced birding.
- 9-11:00 a.m.** Bolsa Chica Stewards with Guy Stivers & Kim Kolpin. Emphasis: Restoring coastal sage scrub habitat, and Native American history.
- 12-1:00 p.m.** Fish Walk with Bob Hoffman, NOAA. Emphasis: Comparison of fish pre- & post-restoration.
- 12-2:00 p.m.** Bolsa Chica Stewards with Guy Stivers & Kim Kolpin. Repeating earlier tour.
- 1-4:00 p.m.** Voice of the Marsh Ecology Tour with Trude Hurd (Sea & Sage Audubon). Emphasis: Relationships between plants, animals, mud and tides.
- 1-4:00 p.m.** Behind the Scenes Tour with Dr. Victor Leipzig. Emphasis: Bolsa Chica Restoration Project; land use and political issues.
- 4:00-5:30 p.m.** Endangered Species Tour with Dick Zembal. Emphasis: Light-footed Clapper Rail, Belding's Savannah Sparrow, Western Snowy Plover and more.

GRAB OUR TOOLS

By Kim Kolpin



Since our October planting kick off, the Stewards have planted 1,683 plants, sown \$100 worth of seed, and used more than 8,000 gallons of water all in the area by the Point over looking the pocket wetland.

Now is the season for thinking about your own home garden. Native plants are beautiful, mostly drought tolerant and low maintenance, and they invite in the most amazing wildlife. Two Earth Days ago, our celebrations focused on all of the beautiful butterflies we are blessed with here in Southern California. The Stewards sold butterfly friendly plants at the event. One lone milkweed ended up unsold and came home with me. Since I never have enough hours in the day, the milkweed languished in its grower's pot – staring at me helplessly for over a year. Finally, I was able to get the poor thing in the ground thrown in unceremoniously, next to the curb, under a new palm that the city planted. A few weeks later, my husband comes running in the door all excited because there are a dozen or so monarch caterpillars on our sidewalk.

The milkweed was nothing but sticks, all its foliage gone, and the caterpillars were looking for more. Fortunately, my kids are pros at raising caterpillars and through Bolsa Chica we have a wonderful group of friends with kids all the same ages, and all with milkweed growing in their yards (only at Bolsa will you find that kind of combination!). So, in total over 20 caterpillars were found and shared with friends. 17 or so made it to take wing as butterflies and were released in gardens in Huntington Beach, Cypress, and Fountain Valley. All from one neglected milkweed. Now, the milkweed has regrown its leaves waiting for the next group of hungry mouths.

So, yes, just by putting a native plant or two in your garden can make a big difference. One that you may be able to enjoy with your children, your friends and neighbors. One, that may give more joy than you ever thought possible from a garden plant. One that may feed and harbor something magical.

Happy Spring to you all. We hope you will join us this Earth Day, April 21st, in bringing lots of magical things to Bolsa Chica!

Kim Kolpin is a director of the Bolsa Chica Stewards, the restoration team of the Bolsa Chica land Trust. She can be reached at (714) 717-6304 or at Kolpin@stanford.edu

LAND TRUST AND AMIGOS GET TOGETHER

This year the Bolsa Chica Land Trust is pleased to help the Amigos de Bolsa Chica with their annual clean-up event. Come out and help on March 17th, 9:00am till noon. Groups will go out of both Reserve parking lots at 9:00am and finish by noon. Please wear long pants and closed toe shoes – everything else will be provided. We hope to see you there!

MIRACLES OF THE MARSH STARTS ITS FIFTH YEAR

By Marinka Horack

An American Bittern and a Reddish Egret welcomed the Miracles of the Marsh docent team to Bolsa Chica on a beautiful December morning. The docents were there for their practice tour of the wetlands and mesa. The warm sunshine and the uncommon bird sightings opened the tour season on a delightful note. The Bolsa Chica Land Trust has embarked on its fifth year of providing tours to thousands of school children from Orange and Los Angeles Counties.

Our school tours start in January and go to June. The docent team is led by Education Coordinator, Linda Wolfe, who schedules the schools and docents. Several docents are retired teachers, two are college professors, one a principal, and one a former Huntington Beach mayor. Each tour is led by four docents and includes up to 60 students, teachers, and parent chaperons. After a walk along the trail, the students attend four outdoor

classes about Bolsa Chica wildlife, native plants, local history, and water quality.

Then the tours continue on to the Great Blue Heron nesting site at the mesa eucalyptus grove. Heron nesting season is in full swing from February through June, and students can observe the herons building up the nests, and later in the season, feeding their chicks. Often there are hawks, ravens, hummingbirds, meadowlarks, and other songbirds to see on the mesa.

The ultimate goal of our school tours is to impart in the students the idea that this rare and extraordinary ecosystem of Bolsa Chica is a place that we must restore, protect, preserve, and enjoy.

Marinka Horack has been a Land Trust board member since 1988 and is a docent for Miracles of the Marsh and our Sunday Bolsa Chica tours.



The Miracles of the Marsh docents team prepares for their fifth season of conducting tours for elementary school children at Bolsa Chica.



Bolsa Chica Land Trust

5200 Warner Avenue, #108, Huntington Beach, CA 92649

Website: www.bolsachicalandtrust.org
 Email: bclt@bolsachicalandtrust.org

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 Huntington Beach
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Members: Renewal date shown on your mailing label
 Annual dues are tax deductible
 I want to join the Bolsa Chica Land Trust and help
 preserve the whole Bolsa Chica Ecosystem.
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Membership Renewal/ Application to

This is a
 Renewal
 Membership

_____ \$50.00 + Honor Roll
 _____ \$20.00 Family
 _____ \$15.00 Individual
 _____ \$10 Senior/Student

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Telephone _____
 E-Mail _____

Directory

Bolsa Chica Land Trust
 Exec. Director Marc Strdivant 714-846-1001
 Educ. Program Linda Wolfe 714-846-4588
 BC Stewards Kelly Keller 562-920-4215
 All Bolsa Chica Land Trust gift items available at Land Trust
 Office: Hours: 9:30AM to 5:30PM, M-Th

Regular Land Trust Events

BCLT Board Meetings
 2nd Thursday of each month. 7PM
 Call 714-846-1001 for location
 BCLT Wetlands Table & Wetlands-Mesa Tour
 3rd Sunday of each month. 9AM-3PM
 Free Guided Tour 10AM-12noon
 PCH Parking at BC Wetlands
 For info & to help call 714-964-8170
 Bolsa Chica Stewards
 1st Sunday and 3rd Saturday of each month.
 9AM-12noon. Meet in parking lot at PCH &
 Warner. Habitat restoration, trail maintenance,
 etc. For information, call 562-920-4215

**It is horrifying that we have to
 fight our own government to save
 the environment.**

Ansel Adams