Concerns regarding the archeological excavations at the Brightwater Development continue to mount. In a letter dated April 8, 2008, to the California Coastal Commission, Larry Myers of the Native American Heritage Commission states “The NAHC remains concerned about the Brightwater-Bolsa Chica Project. The NAHC has not received a report clearly showing the dates, locations and details of burial discoveries. At this point based on information available and the large number of burials recovered and associated items, it appears that the whole area may be a burial ground.”

The Bolsa Chica Land Trust has joined Native Americans and the California Cultural Resources Preservation Alliance in filing a petition to the California Coastal Commission alleging Hearthside Homes improper handling of human remains and artifacts. Photo by Connie Boardman

The Land Trust has learned:
• The reburials of the human remains were far more than “bone fragments” as conveyed by the coroner reports. Burials of “the ORA 85 people” are not a few bone fragments.
• The archeologist for the developer has confirmed that “the 22 cogged stones found at the ‘house pit’ of an apparent Shaman or tribal leader are clearly associated grave goods.”
• Over 100,000 artifacts have been found
• 4,217 artifacts were found during the grading monitoring on ORA 83
• 1,622 artifacts were found during the grading monitoring on ORA 85
• 83 prehistoric features were uncovered with the burials
• 87 human “bone concentrations” need to be reburied
These recent disclosures raise much larger questions than who is to blame for the current situation. There has never been any doubt that the Cogged Stone site at Bolsa Chica was of international significance. In 2001 the State Historic Preservation Commission voted overwhelmingly to approve listing the Cogged Stone site as a historic site. The only other locations on earth that have such a concentration of the 8,000 year old cogged stones are two sites in Chile, Huentelauquen and Quebrada Las Conchas. That alone speaks to the amazing significance of this site.

What is being missed in the recent discourse is the tragic loss of our collective history. 8,000 years ago these first people of our region lived here, raised their families, fished the waters off Bolsa Chica, fashioned tools and jewelry, manufactured these mysterious cogged stones, traveled to Catalina, and laid their loved ones to rest. All of this was happening 4,000 years before Stonehenge was built, and over 3,000 years before the pyramids of Egypt were constructed.

The fact that it is the last early Holocene coastal village site with an associated cemetery in Orange County should give us all pause. If this had been a Christian burial site, it would be treated with the reverence it deserves. What can be done to recover and remember our collective history? We recognize that Hearthside Homes has the permits to build on the 65 acres. Would it be so difficult for Hearthside Homes to stop and reconsider their development footprint?

Bolsa Chica is a place of such natural beauty and archeological significance that a memorial would be a wonderful way to help us all remember the ancient history of this region. Our children and their children would have a way to connect with the first people of Bolsa Chica by visiting this significant site.

“Treat the earth well: it was not given to you by your parents, it was loaned to you by your children. We do not inherit the Earth from our Ancestors, we borrow it from our Children.” -- Native American Proverb
MORE SHEA SHENANIGANS AT THE COASTAL COMMISSION

After a 90 minute public hearing in Marina del Rey on May 7th, the California Coastal Commission voted to approve revised findings for the Upper Bolsa Chica Wetlands Land Use Plan. Rather than accept their own staff’s version, however, the Commission voted to use a version submitted just a few hours before the hearing by developer Shea Homes. While state law allows such late submissions, the Land Trust was frustrated once again by the easy willingness of the Commission majority to follow whatever Shea tells them to follow and their repeated rejection of the opinions of their own expert staff.

The issue of contention with the revised findings was whether or not the Commission authorized suggested mitigation for the loss or destruction of wetlands at a 4:1 ratio during their six hour hearing in San Diego. The Land Trust supported the 4:1 ratio in both its written and public comments last November. Speaking on behalf of the Land Trust at the May 7th proceedings, board member Julie Bixby argued that there was never a proposal, motion or vote by the Commission to eliminate wetlands mitigation during the November hearing. Shea Homes countered that the Commissioners were relying solely on illustrated maps submitted by Shea and Commission staff, and that none of those graphics depicted 4:1 mitigation; therefore, it was not included in the final vote.

Shea even handed the Commissioners a slip of paper on how to approve the developer’s version of revised findings, which excluded the 4:1 mitigation. Not surprisingly, Commissioner Dan Secord moved, and Commissioner Ben Hueso seconded, those motions, which passed easily. The new version will have gone to the Huntington Beach City Council by the time you receive this newsletter. With the current make-up of the Council, acceptance is likely.

This does not end the fight to save the Upper Wetlands! If the Council accepts the revised Land Use Plan, the next step is for them to apply to the Coastal Commission for an Implementation Plan Amendment. That means another public hearing at City Hall, another public hearing before the Coastal Commission, and further delay for the developer.

The Land Trust will continue the fight until the Upper Wetlands are preserved.

NOTICE

Pursuant to the by-laws of the Bolsa Chica Land Trust, the general meeting of members – which was to have been held in June 2008 – will be held on July 24, 2008 at 7 pm. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Huntington Beach. The election of the directors of the Land Trust will take place at this meeting, with the officers to be selected immediately thereafter. Any member who wishes to nominate someone as a director should do so by sending that person’s or persons’ names(s) to the Land Trust office in advance of the meeting. Also, all members of the land Trust are invited to attend the above meeting and to participate in the vote of the directors.
Grab Our Tools

By Kim Kolpin

Wow, what an Earth Day!

This past April 21st was the largest Stewards event yet. Kicked off by Mayor Debbie Cook and Department of Fish and Game Reserve Manager Kelly O’Reilly we almost doubled last year’s record volunteer attendance. 550 people came out to plant nearly 1,000 native plants, and used 2,000 gallons of water to get them all in.

There is always a lot going on, but this year we packed it in to one crazy morning. In addition to the mega-planting, four brand new kiosk panels were installed at the Mesa Point. Highlighting amazing bird species, Native American history, modern history, and the Stewards decade of hard work, these panels were generously funded by the Huntington Beach Rotary Club.

Also two wonderful young ladies, Savanna Smith and Jenna Vandenbrande, earned their Silver Star Girl Scout awards by creating art panels featuring the water cycle which will be used in the new BCLT summer program. They organized a group of girl scouts to make multiple copies of the panels that morning and also assisted me in the event coordination and obtained donations of food, learning leadership and event planning skills along the way.

The wonderful thing about native grass-roots organizations is that everyone pitches in to help, and this Earth Day’s success is due to the dedication and generosity of the following groups and organizations: Savanna and Jenna, their families, friends and Girl Scout troops 156, 371 and 2214. Margaret Carlberg and the Amigos de Bolsa Chica who co-hosted the event. Metropolitan Water District of Southern California who funded much of the event. Bill Kettler and the Huntington Beach Rotary for the kiosk panels and their patience. Mayor Cook, Kelly O’Reilly, Jeff Stoddard, Karen Minor, Steve Smith, Trader Joes, Rainbow Disposal, Subway Sandwiches, the Robles family, Johnny Rebs’, Tree of Life, and H2O To Go.

Of course, none of this could happen without the 17 Stewards Core Team members, our 9 Stewards Kids Team members, and Flossie Horgan, BCLT’s own supernova.

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@standford.edu
President’s Message

By Gerald Chapman

This is my last message as the President of the Bolsa Chica Land Trust. I would like to say first what a wonderful experience it has been working with such a dedicated group of individuals. When I assumed the presidency from Evan Henry, I asked him “What advice can you give me?” He responded with a smile and said, “Do you know how to herd cats?” At times it felt that way, but I would not have traded the experience for anything.

I would like to list some of the Land Trust’s most memorable accomplishments while I have been your President:

• Marching in the Huntington Beach 4th of July Parade and experiencing the huge positive public response to our efforts.

• The hiring of two phenomenal executive directors, Marc Stirdivant and Flossie Horgan.

• The publishing of our beautiful Wings over Bolsa calendars.

• Saving the majority of the Bolsa Chica Uplands from development with the acquisition by the state of the Lower Bench.

• Formal recognition of the Bolsa Chica Stewards as the “Restoration Team of the Bolsa Chica Land Trust” and their unmatched restoration successes.

• The opening of the Bolsa Chica Wetlands Restoration to the ocean after more than 30 years of hard work by the Amigos de Bolsa Chica and the Land Trust.

• The successful fundraising effort for the Foot Bridge to eliminate the need for pedestrians to cross Outer Bolsa Bay on Warner Avenue.

• Continuing the fight to save the Upper Bolsa Chica Wetlands (Shea property) from development.

• The writing and approval of the Interim Management Plan for the restoration of the Lower Bench and the work towards the approval of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Fish and Game.

• Our well attended Town Hall Meetings.

• The continued support for the Native Americans in their ongoing fight to save the Sacred Burial sites on the Brightwater development and the D.E. Goodell property.

I can honestly say that this has been my most rewarding volunteer experience and none of this would have been possible without the support of our dedicated officers, board of directors, and most importantly, our membership. I am confident that the Bolsa Chica Land Trust will continue to be one of the most respected environmental groups in California and the nation.

It has been like “herding cats” but as I said, I would not have traded it for anything. What a wonderful “herd” to drive. Thanks to all of you.
NEWS AND NOTES FROM AROUND BOLSA CHICA

Beach Clean-up

A great big thank you goes to our hearty Land Trust Beach Clean-up team for completing their 11th year of beach clean-up. Carol Koelle, our coordinator, did a great job making sure that we all had gloves, plastic bags and parking permits.

From November until the end of March, we met every Tuesday from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. and cleaned up the beach near 20th Street between life guard stations 16 and 18. We want to thank all who ventured out on those winter mornings with a special thank you to Mike McMahan and Richard Valdes. The City sponsored the beach clean up this year and we thank them for the $1,000.00 we received as a result of our efforts.

It is truly a wonderful way to get some exercise and to be out on the ocean’s edge during the winter months with no crowds – just the mighty ocean and beautiful vistas. Join us next year you will be glad you did.

Miracles of the Marsh completes its 6th year.

The Bolsa Chica Land Trust education program completed its 6th year of teaching children about the wonders of Bolsa Chica. Over 1,700 students from schools as far away as Fullerton and Carson, participated this season. Linda Wolfe, our Project Coordinator always does an outstanding job of scheduling, organizing, and supervising the program.

This year with a grant from Boeing Employees Community Fund, we were able to create a student activity booklet which each student received before the visit to Bolsa Chica. These exciting workbooks help the teachers prepare the students for the outdoor education experience. The many thank you letters which we have received from the children reinforce our commitment to this program.

The real stars are of this program are our 26 terrific volunteer docents. We believe the overwhelming positive response from the students, teachers and parents is largely attributable to our docents. Without their dedication and enthusiasm we would have no program at all. A thank you goes to all of our members who contribute to the Land Trust programs.

“Walk to the Wild Side” Pedestrian Bridge

The Pedestrian Bridge moved a step closer to reality in May. The Coastal Commission received over 200 postcards from Land Trusters urging approval of the construction of the pedestrian bridge at Bolsa Chica for the sake of public safety. They listened. At the Coastal Commission meeting the Commission voted unanimously to approve the project and grant a permit. A huge hurdle has been overcome and now the DFG will move forward to get the bridge out to bid. Hopefully it will be open to the public by October. Stay tuned.
Volunteers Needed

If you enjoy Sunday outings to Bolsa Chica, you may be just the person we’re looking for to help us at our Wetlands Table on the 3rd Sunday of every month.

At the table, we welcome visitors to Bolsa Chica and distribute our newsletters, bird ID guides, and T-shirts. Often we strike up interesting conversations with the visitors. Here is some information in case you might like to volunteer:

The table is located in the south parking lot at Bolsa Chica from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. We staff the table in two shifts from 10 a.m. -12 p.m. and 12 p.m. -2 p.m.

We just need four people – two for each shift. You will not be alone for the first time. A seasoned volunteer will always be with you. If you would like to try it just once a year, that would be great.

Here are the dates available for the rest of the year: July 20, August 17, September 21, October 19, November 16, and December 21st.

On the same day the Land Trust offers a free tour of the wetlands that starts at 10 a.m. The tours are led by Judy Todd or Marinka Horack - two of our talented docents. The tours are free. For more information about the free tours and about volunteering at the Wetlands table, call Marinka at (714) 964-8170.

LAND TRUST BEGINS A NEW SUMMER EDUCATION PROGRAM

By Laurel Telfer

“K.C. at B.C.”- Kids Conserve at Bolsa Chica is a new program funded by a grant from Metropolitan Water District’s Community Partnering Program, with additional contributions from the Will J. Reid Foundation. It will be held on alternate Wednesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon during July and August. The goal is to offer a fun, educational, exciting summer docent program to accommodate demand from summer camps and year round schools.

The instruction will focus on the vital nature of water to plants and animals at Bolsa Chica, and the importance of water conservation and water quality. Each group of students will also have the opportunity to add to murals depicting the water cycle and its relationship to a healthy ecosystem.

The program is planned for students in grades 2-6, but can be adapted to other ages. Group size will be limited. Participants will need to wear comfortable clothes, walking shoes, and bring sunscreen and water. Since the pedestrian bridge will not be completed until October, K.C at B.C. will meet at the south parking lot on PCH. Participating groups will need to provide their own transportation to and from the site.

If you know about a year round school, home schoolers or summer groups that might enjoy participating, invite them to call Flossie Horgan at the BCLT office at (714) 846-1001.

Laurel Telfer recently joined the Board of Directors of the Land Trust. A life-long educator, she was named National Distinguished Principal from California in 2004.
BOLSAL CHICA ADOPT-A-BEACH
By Paul Arms

The Bolsa Chica ecosystem faces constant challenges that range from development, non-native plants, inappropriate uses, and pollution such as urban run-off and trash. While the ecosystem is often under attack, the Bolsa Chica Land Trust is always there to defend this beautiful jewel of the Southern California coast.

Even though it is heavily used by residents and visitors alike, Bolsa Chica State Beach is part of the greater Bolsa Chica ecosystem and is in constant need of care and support. As part of our efforts to protect and support the health of the ecosystem, the Bolsa Chica Land Trust has adopted Bolsa Chica State Beach through the Adopt-A-Beach program. The Adopt-A-Beach project is a program of the California Coastal Commission and overseen locally by California State Parks.

The Bolsa Chica Adopt-A-Beach program allows people of all ages the opportunity to protect marine birds and animals, learn about the conservation of our beautiful Bolsa Chica, and maybe make some new friends at the same time. Our first scheduled beach clean-up is at Bolsa Chica State Beach is Saturday, July 12th from 8:00 a.m. to noon.

Please check our web site for more updates and details or call the office in July at (714) 846-1001. If you have participated in one of our programs it would be great to see you again. If you have never participated, please join us. It will be great to meet you!

Paul Arms is Vice President of the Land Trust Board of Directors

MARK & JULIE BIXBY HONORED BY SEA & SAGE AUDUBON

The Sea & Sage Audubon Society of Orange County presented the Land Trust’s Mark & Julie Bixby with their 2008 Fern Zimmerman Conservation Award. The Bixbys were honored “for exemplary grassroots initiative in the continuing fight to protect the Bolsa Chica in Huntington Beach.” The Bolsa Chica Land Trust is a previous recipient of this award.

Mark and Julie Bixby are honored by Sea and Sage Audubon. Photo by Dan Trinidad
BCLT UNSUNG HEROES – Marinka Horack

Marinka Horack is a retired history teacher. That must explain the fact that she has a record of every plant ever planted by the Bolsa Chica Stewards, every hour of volunteer work performed by the thousands who have helped the Stewards over the years, and every school, student and docent that have been involved in the Miracles of the Marsh education program.

She also leads tours of the Bolsa Chica, supervises the wetlands table every third Sunday (as she has for the past 15 years), testifies at all public hearings, and serves as the Secretary of the Land Trust’s Board of Directors. She has also hosted the newsletter mailing parties at her home for the past fifteen years.

The Land Trust benefits from the volunteer support we receive from many of our 6,000 members. But Marinka is in a class by herself. She is one of our stars.

Marinka Horak and Jeff & Natalie Rokos are among the volunteers that make the Land Trust special.

VOLUNTEER VOICES

By Natalie & Jeff Rokos

As soon we moved to Huntington Beach in 1995 we were drawn to the Bolsa Chica as our nearest open space and bird-watching spot. While attending a Bolsa Chica Land Trust event shortly thereafter, we learned about the Bolsa Chica Stewards, the restoration team of the Bolsa Chica Land Trust. Kim Kennedy and Thierry Kolpin were making a pitch for people who wanted to help do some gardening on the mesa property that had already been protected by the state. The idea of actually getting our hands in the earth at the place we sought to preserve motivated us to show up for our initial Saturday workday. The morning’s work produced sweat and blisters, but it satisfied a guilty pleasure: after volunteering, we left feeling good about ourselves, having accomplished something worthwhile.

It has been about ten years now and the fruits of our labors reward us each time we walk the trail out to Mesa Point. Not only do we revel in the colors and scents of the native plants we helped put in, and the wildlife making use of them, but we are also more knowledgeable about Bolsa Chica because of our association with the Stewards.

This New Year’s first morning we gathered on Mesa Point with fellow members of the Bolsa Chica Land Trust to accept one of the annual Kennedy-Kolpin Bolsa Chica Conservation Awards. An award for our efforts, named for the very people who inspired us to get involved in the first place. Talk about coming full circle!
Bolsa Chica Land Trust
Non-Profit Org.

5200 Warner Avenue, #108, Huntington Beach, CA 92649
Website: www.bolsachicalandtrust.org
Email: bclt@bolsachicalandtrust.org

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. For information, call 562-920-4215

Directory

Bolsa Chica Land Trust
Exec. Director Flossie Horgan 714-846-1001
Educ. Program Linda Wolfe 714-846-4588
BC Stewards Kim Kolpin 714-771-6304

Membership Renewal/Application
Mail your completed Membership Application to
Bolsa Chica Land Trust
5200 Warner Avenue, #108
Huntington Beach, CA 92649

Membership: Renewal date shown on your mailing label
Annual dues are tax deductible. Preserve the whole Bolsa Chica Ecosystem. I want to join the Bolsa Chica Land Trust and help
Huntington Beach, CA 92649
5200 Warner Avenue, #108
Bolsa Chica Land Trust

We are all crew... Marshall McLuhan

There are no passengers on Spaceship Earth.

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

2500 Warner Avenue, #108, Huntington Beach, CA 92649