Land Trust Takes Legal Action to Save the Bluffs at Bolsa Chica

By Connie Boardman and Joe Shaw

On July 6, 2010, in spite of strenuous opposition by the Bolsa Chica Land Trust and members of the community, the Huntington Beach City Council voted 5 to 1 to change the land use designation on 5 acres of land on the Bolsa Chica Mesa from open space/parkland to residential.

Believing that the City Council action of July 6th violated the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), attorneys for the Land Trust filed a petition for writ of mandate challenging the City of Huntington Beach’s approval of “The Ridge” housing development.

If allowed to proceed, the approved development would have significant adverse impacts on the Bolsa Chica wetlands ecosystem.

The City Council’s action:
• Changed the Land Use Designation from Open Space- Park to Residential
• Violated the Coastal Element of the City’s General Plan
• Subdivided the approximately 5 acre site into 22 single family residential to accommodate homes with 2-3 car garages.
• Granted concessions because it will allegedly be the City’s first “green” project.
• Permitted construction on a site with greater than a three foot grade differential
• Reduced the ESHA buffer approved by the California Coastal Commission
• Will destroy a 9,000 year old archaeological site of international significance
• Allowed for flexibility in accommodating the total number of required parking spaces in PUD development

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The council received more than 600 postcards from Bolsa Chica supporters asking them not to change the land use designation. There were dozens of speakers at the meeting, and only one, the developer’s representative, spoke in favor of the project. However, this outpouring of support for Bolsa Chica did not move the Huntington Beach City Council.

It’s extremely disappointing that the majority of this council does not value open space. Even though the City has a deficit of parkland, the council still voted to turn five acres of open space into housing at one of the most sensitive ecological areas in the region. Fortunately for the bluffs at Bolsa Chica, the Huntington Beach City Council does not have the final word on this development. The project will have to go to the California Coastal Commission for approval.

A big thanks goes to all of you who came to the meeting, and all those who contacted the City Council. You showed the City that hundreds of people in our community support saving the last remaining undeveloped areas of Bolsa Chica.

Now we need your help. Any lawsuit is costly, but the Board believes that the price is worth it if we can save the bluffs at Bolsa Chica. Together we can save the bluffs of Bolsa Chica.

Support the “Save the Bluffs” Legal Defense Fund. Go to www.bolsachicalandtrust.org/donate.html to make a donation.

You can also mail a contribution to Bolsa Chica Land Trust 5200 Warner Avenue - Suite 108 Huntington Beach CA 92649.

Connie Boardman is the former Mayor of Huntington Beach and president of the Bolsa Chica Land Trust.

Joe Shaw has been a member of the Land Trust Board of Directors since 2009.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT by Flossie Horgan

Land Trust has New Officers and Board Members

At our annual meeting in July, the Board of Directors elected Connie Boardman to fill the position vacated by outgoing President, Paul Arms.

Connie is a Professor of Biology at Cerritos Community College in Norwalk. As a graduate student at California State University, Long Beach her research focused on the California Least Tern, an endangered bird species that nests at Bolsa Chica in the Spring and Summer months. Connie has been part of the Bolsa Chica Land Trust for 18 years. In 2000, she was elected to the Huntington Beach City Council and served as Mayor of the City in 2003. In 2010, she was recognized as an Environmental Hero by Southern California Edison for her work at Bolsa Chica.

Carrie Thomas will serve as Vice President. Carrie has served on the boards of the Orange County California Restaurant Association, Huntington Beach Sister Cities, Huntington Beach Tomorrow, and Huntington Beach Community Services, as well as on the Huntington Beach Environmental Board and Huntington Beach Planning Commission. She is a docent for the Miracles of the Marsh program at Bolsa Chica.

Julie Bixby, Dr. Gerald Chapman, Sandy Genis, Dave Hamilton, Laurel Telfer, Mike McMahan, Karen Merickel, Joe Shaw, and Marc Stirdivant.

Returning board members include

Returning as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, are Marinka Horack and Jim Anderson. Returning board members include

We also wish to thank former board members Paul Arms, Vi Cowden and Rudy Vietmeir for their years of service and dedication to the mission of preserving all of Bolsa Chica.
As part of the permitting process for our CPR (Community Promoted Restoration) For The Mesa project this past spring, Dr. Patricia Martz led the archeological survey of the Lower Bench of the Bolsa Chica Mesa.

The survey document is amazing as it details the history of the Mesa’s native peoples and the environment in which they lived and at the same time will help us in healing the land for the future. In planning the restoration we take clues from the past to create a sustainable future for the habitat of the Mesa.

We know the Mesa was populated by native peoples from 9000 years ago. They lived in harmony with, utilized and altered the habitat of the Mesa. Today, we can only dream of what Bolsa Chica was like then. The following paragraphs from the survey paint a beautiful picture:

“The coastal plain was dissected by the ancient Santa Ana, San Gabriel, and Los Angeles rivers, which meandered over the plain throughout the Holocene and into historic times. The rivers cut six gaps in the seaward portion of the plain, including the gap between Bolsa Chica and Huntington Beach mesas. The Bolsa Chica mesa was formed by uplifting and offset into two benches by tectonic activity along the Newport-Inglewood Fault. The mesa provided an ideal site for prehistoric settlements because it contained springs, and the high ground protected the villages from flooding. The initial flooding of the Bolsa Chica Gap (the lowlands between Bolsa Chica and Huntington Beach mesas) occurred approximately 7,500 years ago.

As sea levels stabilized, sandy beaches formed along the coast. Tidal action deposited sand spits across the mouth of Bolsa Bay, gradually changing a sheltered bay into a trapped lagoon. The types and distributions of inter-tidal plants and animals changed through time as the lagoon silted in. Marine habitats in proximity to the project area included outer ocean, sheltered outer coast, bays, and estuaries. A wide array of diverse maritime and terrestrial food resources was available throughout the long occupation of the site, as the inter-tidal zone is biologically, one of the most productive zones on earth. The intertidal zone made a gradual transition to freshwater marsh, riparian woodland, and terrestrial communities, with grassland and coastal sage scrub on the mesa. Riparian woodland existed along the Santa Ana River and likely appeared and disappeared as the river shifted and changed course.”

The Land Trust has taken on the challenge of restoring the Mesa because we know that under the cover of European weeds is the possibility, the potential, to get a little bit of this picture back.

Kim Kolpin is the Director of the Bolsa Chica Stewards, the Restoration Team of the Bolsa Chica Land Trust. She can be reached at (714) 717-6304

© Connie Boardman
You are invited to join the annual pilgrimage of the gabrielino/tongva & juaneno/acjachemem people.

HONOR THE SPIRIT OF THE NATIVE AMERICAN ANCESTORS AND THEIR HISTORIC HOME AT BOLSA CHICA

Saturday, October 2, 2010
12 noon & 1:30 p.m.
WARNER AVENUE PARKING LOT

Noted Bird Expert to Speak at September Town Hall Meeting

Say the name “Sylvia Ranney Gallagher” to local birders (as well as not-so-local birders) and they will enthusiastically nod in recognition.

For over 30 years, Sylvia has been teaching classes on behalf of Orange County’s Sea and Sage Audubon Society, headquartered in Irvine. Her classes, varying in length from one day to a series of eight weeks with multiple field trips, focus on identifying birds in Southern California—by sight, by sound, by behavior, by location and by habitat. Her courses are enhanced by the outstanding bird photography of her husband, Jim Gallagher, who takes the photos as the two of them travel far and wide throughout the West and other parts of the United States.

Imagine the delight of the Bolsa Chica Land Trust that Sylvia has agreed to be the featured speaker at the annual Town Hall Meeting on September 23rd!

The subject of her talk will be on the most common year-round and migrant birds at the Bolsa Chica, and of course, Jim will be therewith his expert photographs. This is an outstanding opportunity for beginning and experienced birders, and particularly for non-birders, to hear from Sylvia and Jim about the awesome avian creatures that entice folks from all over to visit the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve.

Circle September 23rd on your calendar today!! The meeting will be held at the Huntington Beach Public Library from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Also on the program will be the in-person introduction of the winning photographers of the 2011 Bolsa Chica Calendar, which will be hot-off-the-presses and available for sale.

We are expecting a full house, so come early and don’t miss out!
Once considered to be the best in the nation, California’s 278 state parks now rank among the country’s most endangered sites. How did they go from the best to the endangered? Call it death by a thousand cuts- in this case, budget cuts. Today, our State Parks are threatened with closures - some permanently.

Proposition 21 on this November’s ballot will eliminate this threat to our parks. A trust fund will be established that can only be spent on state parks, urban waterways, wildlife, natural lands and ocean conservation programs. Funding will come from an $18 annual State Parks Access Pass surcharge on most California vehicles. Large commercial vehicles, mobile homes and permanent trailers will be exempt.

In return, all California vehicles will receive FREE, YEAR ROUND, DAY USE ADMISSION to all State Parks. Currently, it costs $15 each time you visit a State Park such as Bolsa Chica State Beach.

Our State Parks are a priceless public asset and vital legacies for our children and grandchildren. The Bolsa Chica Land Trust supports Proposition 21. Other supporters include The Nature Conservancy, California Travel Industry, Audubon California, Boy Scouts of America, Surfrider Foundation, Sierra Club California, Laguna Greenbelt, Crystal Cove Alliance, Huntington Beach State Lifeguard Association, Patagonia and many others.

For more information visit: www.yesforstateparks.com

"Miracles of the Marsh" is our elementary school education program which brings children from around Orange County and Long Beach to the Bolsa Chica for a walking tour in this living classroom. Designed to correspond with state-required science learning standards, the program includes a student activity booklet, teacher’s field guide, slide presentation at school site, and field trip to Bolsa Chica.

Led by our team of trained volunteer docents, the children are supplied with binoculars and given instruction on wildlife, plant life, water quality, and local history. The program runs from January to June each year and we are always looking for interested individuals to join our Docent Team. It is fun and the children and teachers love to learn about this precious resource in the midst of our urban environment.

The Land Trust is always looking for interested individuals to join our docent team at Bolsa Chica.

For more information on joining the Docent Team call Flossie Horgan at (714) 846-1001.

PROP 21 – Protect State Parks and Conserve Wildlife
New World War II Kiosk at Bolsa Chica.

The Huntington Beach Rotary Club generously donated funding for the latest interpretive kiosk on the Bolsa Chica Mesa.

This kiosk panel tells the story of the Bolsa Chica during World War II. The Bolsa Chica was heavily fortified with the United States Army Coast Artillery from 1941-1945. It was known as the Bolsa Chica Military Reservation. The 3rd Coast Artillery Regiment of the United States Army was housed at the Bolsa Chica Gun Club. A massive underground concrete bunker measuring 600’ by 175’ was constructed on the upper bench of the Bolsa Chica Mesa. Along with the history of the Reservation is a 1947 photo of the Bolsa Chica and surrounding area. It was obtained from the University of California Santa Barbara-Davidson Map and Image Laboratory.

Thanks to the Huntington Beach Rotary, and in cooperation with the Department of Fish and Game, the Land Trust has constructed five interpretive kiosks on the Bolsa Chica Mesa which explore the biology, prehistoric archaeological sites, historical World War II bunkers, and restoration efforts at Bolsa Chica. These kiosks offer educational opportunities which further enrich the visitors experience at Bolsa Chica.

The Huntington Beach Rotary Club’s donation of these kiosks at Bolsa Chica is a great service to this community and we thank them. We especially want to thank Bill Kettler who initiated this project with the Rotary.

(Left to right) Huntington Beach Rotary Club members Dottie Rodgers, Dale Dunn, Bill Kettler, President Margaret Nerio, Dick Wilson, Oscar Rosales, Mary Baley, Carol Kelly, John Baley, Wally Buchanan, and Land Trust Board member, Mike McMahan.
I want to join the Bolsa Chica Land Trust and help preserve the whole Bolsa Chica Ecosystem. This is a renewal membership.

Annual dues are tax deductible

Members’ renewal date shown on your mailing label

This is a renewal membership

I want to join the Bolsa Chica Land Trust and help

Mail Your Completed Membership Application To:

______________________________________________

E-Mail: _______________________________________

Telephone: ____________________________

City ____________________________ Zip ____________

Address: ______________________________________

______________________________________________

Name: ________________________________

$20.00 Family  $15.00 Individual

$50.00 Honor Roll

$10.00 Senior/Student

Mail Your Completed Membership Application to:

Bolsa Chica Land Trust
5200 Warner Avenue, #108
Huntington Beach, CA 92649

Annual dues are tax deductible

This is a renewal membership

I want to join the Bolsa Chica Land Trust and help

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Huntington Beach
Permit #837

Website: www.bolsachicalandtrust.org
Email: bclandtrust@verizon.net

Huntington Beach, CA 92649

Ansel Adams
Huntington Beach, CA 92649

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

Editor: Marc Stirdivant
Design: Sue Groetsch Davis
Printed with vegetable inks on FSC certified post-consumer recycled paper.

Please recycle this newsletter or share it with others

Friends with离婚ide
FMa8064

Endorse your Congressional District

Scheduled 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 714-717-6304

Bolsa Chica Land Trust
5200 Warner Avenue, #108
Huntington Beach, CA 92649

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