

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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W14c

CDP 5-19-1032 (ORANGE COUNTY DEPT. OF PUBLIC
WORKS)

JULY 8, 2020

CORRESPONDENCE



July 1, 2020

California Coastal Commission
45 Fremont St. #2000
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: W14c Application 5-19-1032 Orange County Department of Public Works

Dear Chair Padilla and Commissioners:

Following many starts and stops with attempts to protect and preserve the endangered species at the Santa Ana River/River Jetties Beach/Huntington Beach Least Tern Preserve, we believe your staff has worked with the County of Orange on implementing a positive first step in achieving protection and preservation of this very special area. Our group of environmental organizations that have been coming before you for several years would like to collectively support staff's recommendation for approval of the proposed signage in CDP application 5-19-1032, including staff's proposed Special Condition One, however, we suggest three modifications.

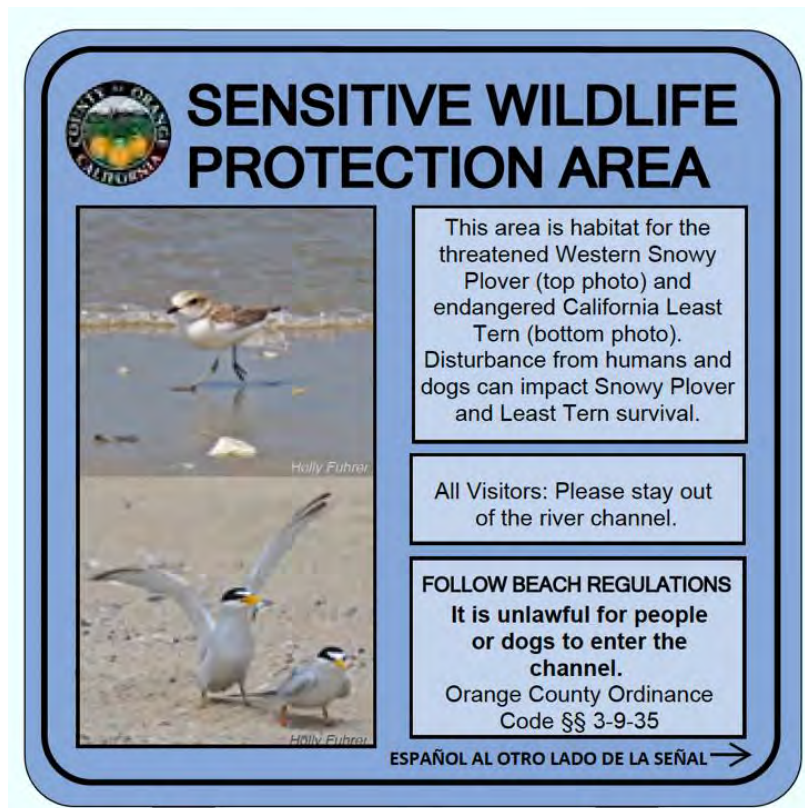
• Modification of signage placement

Your staff has crafted a consolidation of the permitting process with this application which allows the County of Orange, City of Newport Beach and the City of Huntington Beach to work as one unit on this CDP for signage. With that in mind, we suggest that signage be increased to include the two heavily parked streets (Seashore Drive and Summit Street) that accommodate the pet owners, dog walking companies and powered parachute operators in the City of Newport Beach, as well as the Santa Ana River Trail on the City of Huntington Beach side of the Santa Ana River (see mapping on next page). Our goal has always been to alter the behavior of the public that continue to impact the natural resources and endangered species in this sensitive area. Placement of signage in the areas where the public parks and accesses this area is critical to positively altering behavior, and allows the public to see the signage before they enter the beach or the river.



• **Modification of Spanish language educational signage**

The staff report states that all of the signs will be in both Spanish and English – this is excellent. However, please note the small type on the English educational sign at the very bottom with an arrow. This states in Spanish that the Spanish version of the educational sign is on the back of the English sign. We would like to see two separate signs, English and Spanish, either installed side-by-side or the two signs on one pole. Either way, we feel it's important to provide equality in messaging.



• **Modification of Special Condition One**

We support staff's proposal for an annual report on enforcement activity by the County. We believe that additional performance standards and regular monitoring to ensure that signage and enforcement are as effective as possible are needed. We propose that the County also report annually on the status of the two key species of the area, Western Snowy Plover and California Least Tern. One of our organizations, Sea and Sage Audubon Society, has a lengthy history (since 1964) of playing an active role in protecting these birds through monitoring, census programs, and interpretation to the public. We suggest that opportunities for Sea and Sage and other interested NGOs to assist the County in such monitoring programs be included.

We once again thank staff for their work on developing a first step in protecting and preserving this special area that will now hopefully be the home of many Western Snowy Plover and Least Tern, as well as aid in the recovery of the nearby dune ESHA. We thank the Commissioners for listening to our testimonies over the years and taking action when possible. We look forward to this first step being very successful with the help of the County of Orange and cities of Newport Beach and Huntington Beach.

Sincerely,

Andrea Jones
Audubon California

Travis Longcore, Ph.D.
Los Angeles Audubon Society

Susan Sheakley
Sea & Sage Audubon Society

Scott Thomas
Sea & Sage Audubon Society

Steve Ray
Banning Ranch Conservancy

Garry Brown
Orange County Coastkeeper
Inland Empire Waterkeeper

Dan Silver
Endangered Habitats League

Michael Wellborn
Friends of Harbors, Beaches
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Penny Elia
Sierra Club

Conner Everts
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Jack Eidt
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Robert A. Hamilton
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