



AGENDA

Measure M2 Environmental Oversight Committee

Committee Members

Lori Donchak, Chair
Melanie Schlotterbeck, Vice Chair
Chris Flynn, Caltrans District 12
Dr. David Chapel, Grand Jury
Association of OC
Lisa Bartlett, OCTA Board of Directors
David Mayer, CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife
Derek McGregor, DMC Engineering
Veronica Li, US Army Corps of Engineers
Dan Silver, Endangered Habitats League
Jonathan Snyder, US Fish & Wildlife
Service
Anthony Villa, Taxpayers Oversight
Committee Representative
John Walsh, CA Wildlife Conservation
Board

Orange County Transportation Authority
Conference Room 07
550 South Main Street
Orange, California

Wednesday, June 6, 2018 at 2:30 p.m.

Any person with a disability who requires a modification or accommodation in order to participate in this meeting should contact the OCTA Clerk of the Board, telephone (714) 560-5676, no less than two (2) business days prior to this meeting to enable OCTA to make reasonable arrangements to assure accessibility to this meeting.

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Approval of February 7, 2018 Minutes**
- 4. Restoration Projects Tour Recap**
Lesley Hill, OCTA

OCTA hosted a tour of two OCTA funded Irvine Ranch Conservancy restoration projects (Bee Flat Canyon and Lower Silverado) for EOC members on May 2. Staff will provide an overview of that tour.

- 5. Restoration Project Update**
Lesley Hill, OCTA

North Coal Canyon and Chino Hills State Park Projects
Ken Kietzer, Senior Environmental Scientist, California State Parks
Kelly Elliott, Inland Empire District Superintendent, California State Parks

The North Coal Canyon and Chino Hills State Park restoration projects were approved by the Environmental Oversight Committee and OCTA Board of Directors as part of the EMP's second round of restoration funding in 2012 and were incorporated into the OCTA



AGENDA

Measure M2 Environmental Oversight Committee

Conservation Plan. A more detailed discussion of these projects is provided as an attachment to this agenda. Restoration plans have been developed and approved for these projects, however, no other project activities have occurred. As coordination to implement these projects progressed, it was determined the originally proposed contracting process was not feasible. This was due to limitations on the Department of Parks and Recreation contracting process. CHSP staff will present an overview of these complications. Staff will discuss a recommendation to implement the Chino Hills State Park projects.

Recommendation

A. Direct staff to proceed with a competitive bidding process to identify a qualified entity(ies) to implement the North Coal Canyon and Chino Hills State Park restoration projects, as discussed herein.

6. Trabuco Rose Preserve Family Event

Marissa Espino, OCTA

On Saturday, June 9th, OCTA will host a guided hike and family event at the Trabuco Rose Preserve (Formerly Ferber Ranch) in Trabuco Canyon. This event will be focused on families in which children younger than 12 are invited to attend. Staff is planning on having some activities focused on children in addition to a family hike. The event will help educate attendees on the importance of habitat preservation and OCTA's Environmental Mitigation Program. Staff will provide a brief summary about this public event.

7. Public Comments

Members of the public may address the EOC regarding any item. Please complete a speaker's card and submit it to the EOC or notify the EOC the item number on which you wish to speak. Speakers will be recognized by the Chair at the time the agenda item is to be considered. A speaker's comments shall be limited to three (3) minutes.

8. Committee Member Reports

9. Next Meeting – September 5, 2018

10. Adjournment



Minutes

Measure M2 Environmental Oversight Committee

Committee Members

*Lori Donchak, Chairman
Melanie Schlotterbeck, Vice Chair
Lisa Bartlett, Board of Directors
Dr. David Chapel, Grand Jury Assoc. of O.C.
Chris Flynn, Caltrans District 12
Veronica Li, US Army Corp of Engineers
David Mayer, CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife
Dan Silver, Endangered Habitats League
Jonathan Snyder, US Fish & Wildlife
Anthony Villa, Taxpayers Oversight Comm.
John Walsh, CA Wildlife Conserv. Board*

*Orange County Transportation Authority
550 South Main Street, Room 07
Orange, California
Wednesday, February 7, 2018 at 2:30p*

Member(s) Absent

Derek McGregor, DMc Engineering

Any person with a disability who requires a modification or accommodation in order to participate in this meeting should contact the OCTA Clerk of the Board, telephone (714) 560-5676, no less than two (2) business days prior to this meeting to enable OCTA to make reasonable arrangements to assure accessibility to this meeting.

1. Welcome

Chairman Lori Donchak called the Environmental Oversight Committee (EOC) meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Lori Donchak led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of August, 2017 Minutes

Chairman Lori Donchak asked if there were any additions or corrections to the October 4, 2017 EOC minutes. A motion was made by Vice Chair Melanie Schlotterbeck, seconded by Lisa Bartlett and passed unanimously to approve the October 4, 2017 EOC meeting minutes as presented.

4. Environmental Mitigation Program Endowment Fund Investment Report

Rodney Johnson provided an overview of the Environmental Mitigation Program Endowment Fund Investment Report.

Vice Chair Melanie Schlotterbeck asked staff to send the item electronically as it was not attached to the agenda.

Chairman Lori Donchak asked about the volatility of the fund. Rodney Johnson said there is currently not a forecast, but he expects it to be successful.

5. State Water Resources Control Board and Army Corps of Engineers Permit Update

Lesley Hill provided background on the State Water Resources Control Board and Army Corps of Engineers Permit. Spencer MacNeil, United States Army Corps of Engineers, provided details on the permitting process to date and next steps.

Chairman Lori Donchak said the OCTA and its Board of Directors are thankful for this master plan for the permitting process. She said it takes some of the risk/uncertainty out of the process and it is environmentally responsible. Chairman Donchak asked if this story is being shared since it seems to be a model project. Spencer MacNeil said there has never been a project quite like this and other agencies are very interested.

6. Restoration Project Update

Lesley Hill introduced Milan Mitrovich of the Natural Communities Coalition, University of California Irvine (UCI) Ecological Reserve Project. Milan provided a summary of the project to date.

Committee members were happy to hear of the success on the UCI campus and asked about the effects of excessive rainfall in 2016/17. Milan Mitrovich said UCI was active with grass removal through 2015 and said many exotic seeds sprouted due to the rain last year. The rain also helped the native shrubs thrive and they dominated the site. He said the growth of grass is a natural part of the process and it does not impact the natural habitat as long as it does not get out of control.

Committee members asked if there is a sunset on the funding of this project. Milan Mitrovich said some of the funds sunset, but UCI is committed to keeping the project going and eventually it will care for itself.

7. Recap of Aliso Canyon and Hayashi Resource Management Plan (RMP Comments)

Lesley Hill provided a recap of the Aliso Canyon and Hayashi RMP Comments.

The committee discussed the next steps. Lesley Hill said the RMP schedule will be finalized in the summer of 2018. Monte Ward clarified once the RMP is completed there will be long-term management of the project.

The committee discussed the quantity and quality of the comments on each property and if the information was available online. Staff said the comments were split equally between the properties and most comments were regarding public access.

8. Preserve Naming Contest

Marissa Espino presented the Preserve Naming Contest and showed a video regarding the contest. Marissa said currently OCTA has over 200 submissions and the deadline is February 16 with the final unveiling on February 24.

Vice Chair Melanie Schlotterbeck appreciated the process of making the video.

9. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

10. Committee Member Reports

Chairman Lori Donchak and Vice Chair Melanie Schlotterbeck announced Lesley Hill as OCTA's Administrative Employee of the Year for her hard work on this program. Monte Ward also noted Marissa Espino was previously honored with this award for her work on this program.

David Chapel mentioned Rancho Santa Margarita Water District's use of inflatable dams to prevent runoff. He wonders if this will have any effect on the Environmental Mitigation Program's restoration projects. Chairman Lori Donchak said she would like OCTA staff to look into this.

Vice Chair Melanie Schlotterbeck said the U.S. Fish and Wildlife just put out an article on the steelhead trout. She said the EOC recently discussed this in relation to Trabuco Creek. She said she would share the article with the committee.

11. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for May 2, 2018

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.



June 6, 2018

To: Environmental Oversight Committee

From: Orange County Transportation Authority Staff

Subject: Measure M2 Environmental Mitigation Program Restoration Project Recommendation (Chino Hills State Park Restoration Projects)

Overview

Measure M2 includes an Environmental Mitigation Program to provide comprehensive mitigation for the environmental impacts of freeway projects in exchange for streamlined project approvals. As part of this program, the Orange County Transportation Authority has acquired seven conservation properties and provided funding for twelve habitat restoration projects. A status update on two Measure M2 restoration projects, and a recommendation to implement restoration projects at Chino Hills State Park is presented.

Recommendation

Direct staff to proceed with a competitive bidding process to identify a qualified entity(ies) to implement the North Coal Canyon and Chino Hills State Park restoration projects, as discussed herein.

Background

Measure M2 (M2) includes an innovative Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP). Under this program, biological impacts from the M2 freeway program of projects are addressed through a consolidated Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (Conservation Plan). In exchange, state and federal wildlife agencies (California Department of Fish and Wildlife [CDFW], and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS]) agreed to fast-track the permitting process as part of a master agreement for the M2 freeway projects. In a parallel process, the United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) have also established a framework to streamline the regulatory permitting process. The goal of the EMP is to deliver more effective mitigation while supporting faster delivery of M2 freeway improvements.

As part of the M2 Early Action Plan, approximately \$55 million was authorized by the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors (Board) to fund conservation property acquisitions, habitat restoration projects, and to develop the Conservation Plan. This translates to approximately \$42 million and \$10.5 million, respectively, for acquisitions and restoration. To date, two rounds of restoration funding have been approved by the Board, totaling just over \$10 million. In addition, the Board approved funding for a dam removal restoration project with the United States Forest Service in 2017. Attachment A lists the M2 EMP-funded restoration projects. Attachment B contains a graphic of the acquired conservation properties and funded restoration projects.

The acquisition of seven conservation properties, as well as the funding of 12 habitat restoration projects, have largely met the mitigation needs for the M2 freeway projects. OCTA has committed to these efforts through the Conservation Plan, and is well underway in satisfying these obligations. Conservation easements will be recorded over the seven preserves. Moreover, many of the restoration projects are close to, or have obtained approvals, from the wildlife agencies. Two of the previously funded restoration projects (North Coal Canyon and Chino Hills State Park {CHSP}) require further action and are described in detail below.

Discussion

In 2012, the North Coal Canyon and Chino Hills State Park restoration projects were vetted by the Environmental Oversight Committee and approved by the OCTA Board. These second round-funded restoration projects were incorporated into the OCTA Conservation Plan. Two agreements were subsequently executed with the California Department of Parks and Recreation (i.e., CHSP). A general description of these projects is provided in Attachment C. Although the restoration plans have been approved, project activities have not yet occurred.

CHSP intended to have the Orange County Conservation Corps (OCCC) implement both the North Coal Canyon and CHSP projects. During the contract execution process, the OCCC backed out since much of the anticipated work had to be outsourced, which was not consistent with the mission of their organization. CHSP also contemplated working with the California Conservation Corps (CCC) as an option. However, based on other experiences, this work was not in alignment with the capabilities of the CCC. Nonetheless, CHSP contacted the CCC to determine whether they could perform the work and the CCC indicated it was outside their scope.

In response, CHSP approached a third entity, the Irvine Ranch Conservancy (IRC), to determine if it would be willing and able to implement the projects. CHSP has a similar contract with IRC at Crystal Cove State Park. However, the contract between CHSP and IRC did not allow the pass through work, and IRC also indicated the budget might not be sufficient.

CHSP had no other feasible contracting mechanism to implement these projects and will need to dissolve the contracts with OCTA. They have assured OCTA that they fully support the restoration work and would allow another entity access to their park property to ultimately perform the restoration work.

Concurrently, staff has vetted this matter with its contracts department and the wildlife agencies to determine if it could continue to work with CHSP on the projects. Since the Board approved the restoration projects, budgets, and project sponsors, OCTA cannot reassign the contracts to IRC administratively. Furthermore, OCTA would need to amend the project scopes and budget if IRC was to implement the projects. The wildlife agencies recommended that these projects remain within the CHSP and for OCTA to re-solicit prospective project sponsors to remain generally within the original budget given these projects have been integrated into the OCTA Conservation Plan.

Next Steps

As these restoration projects are part of the OCTA Conservation Plan commitments, staff recommends that a competitive bidding process be utilized to identify an entity that can perform the work. The type of contract anticipated for this work would be professional and technical services, which will evaluate the entities based on technical qualifications and previous related project experiences of a similar nature. The implementation of these projects would be evaluated as two distinct projects resulting in two separate agreements. The wildlife agency-approved restoration plans would be utilized as the scopes of work. The selected entity may be a non-profit or a restoration consultant. CHSP supports and will allow access to the selected entity(ies) to implement these restoration projects.

Staff requests approval from the Environmental Oversight Committee to proceed with a competitive bidding process to identify qualified entities to implement the North Coal Canyon and CHSP restoration projects.

Attachments

- A. OCTA M2 Environmental Mitigation Program Funded Restoration Projects
- B. OCTA Preserves and Funded Restoration Projects Graphic
- C. Chino Hills State Parks Restoration Projects Descriptions

OCTA M2 EMP Funded Restoration Projects Summary

	Restoration Project	Sponsor	Proposed Cost	Approx. Acreage*	Geographic Area	General Habitat Types
2010 - Round One	City Parcel	City of San Juan Capistrano	\$1,500,000	53	San Juan Capistrano	riparian corridor, coastal sage scrub, oak woodland and native grassland
	Fairview Park	City of Costa Mesa	\$2,000,000	23	Costa Mesa	wetlands, native grassland, coastal sage scrub, willow scrub and oak woodland
	Irvine Ranch (Agua Chinon and Bee Flat Canyon)	Irvine Ranch Conservancy	\$1,450,00 (\$1,457,160)**	94.9 (90.1)**	Irvine	chaparral, coastal sage scrub, coast live oak/sycamore, oak woodland, native grassland and riparian
	UCI Ecological Reserve	Nature Reserve of OC	\$325,000	8.5	Irvine	cactus scrub
	Big Bend	Laguna Canyon Foundation	\$87,500	3.7	Laguna Beach	Coastal sage scrub and riparian woodland
2012 - Round Two	Aliso Creek	Laguna Canyon Foundation	\$1,105,000	55	Laguna Niguel	riparian
	Chino Hills State Park	Chino Hills State Park	\$193,000	21	Yorba Linda	willow riparian, oak-walnut woodland and cactus scrub
	Harriett Weider Regional Park	Bolsa Chica Conservancy	\$475,000	8.2	Huntington Beach	native grassland, coastal sage scrub and riparian
	Lower Silverado Canyon	Irvine Ranch Conservancy	\$1,399,580 (\$1,414,435)**	44 (28.4)**	County of Orange	riparian
	North Coal Canyon	California Department of Parks and Recreation	\$247,500	5.5	Yorba Linda	coastal sage scrub
	West Loma	Irvine Ranch Conservancy	\$1,296,000 (\$1,322,800)**	80 (62.47)**	County of Orange	scrub, riparian
2016	United States Forest Service Dam Removal	United States Forest Service	\$185,000	14 dams removed	San Juan Capistrano	creek bed and riparian

Note: shaded projects were funded as part of Round 1 and the unshaded projects were part of Round 2.

*Proposed acreage is subject to change and may be adjusted slightly once the restoration work is completed.

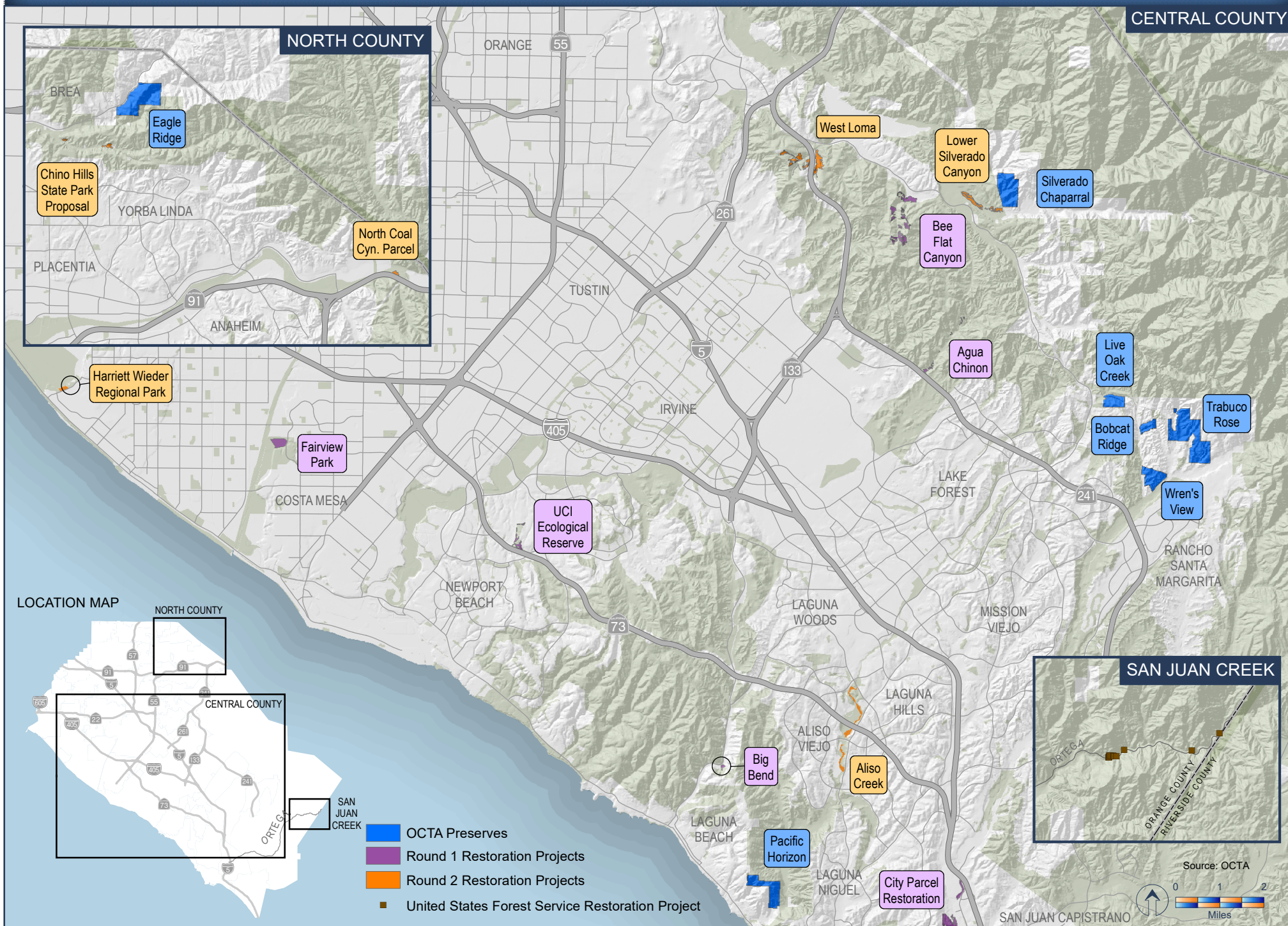
**Amounts depicted in the table were revised/amended and approved by the OCTA Board of Directors in June 2016.

OCTA Preserves and Funded Restoration Projects

Attachment B



CENTRAL COUNTY



Chino Hills State Parks Restoration Projects Descriptions

North Coal Canyon Restoration Project - \$247,500

The proposed restoration project will enhance and restore 5.5 acres of coastal sage scrub on the north side of State Route 91 (SR-91). The property owned by California State Parks at Coal Canyon, within Chino Hills State Park (CHSP) is a vital link between the surrounding Puente-Chino Hills to the north and the Cleveland National Forest and the Santa Ana Mountains on the south. The project is expected to improve wildlife movement by making habitat north of SR-91 more attractive to wildlife and will complete the restoration of the entire Coal Canyon parcel by connecting three other restoration projects being funded by other entities. This bio-corridor is the only remaining link that allows dispersal of wildlife between CHSP and the more diverse Santa Ana Mountains. Coal Canyon provides habitat for the movement of OCTA Conservation Plan Covered Species such as mountain lion and bobcat and provides high quality habitat for coastal California gnatcatcher as well as foraging habitat for the least Bell's vireo.

Chino Hills State Park Project - \$193,000

The original CHSP restoration project proposed to enhance 21 acres of riparian, woodland and cactus scrub habitats. It was later determined that a more intensive cactus scrub restoration project within CHSP would provide better ecological benefits. This project change was coordinated with and approved by the wildlife agencies. The resulting project is an intensive restoration of 11 acres of cactus scrub within CHSP on the slope overlooking Yorba Linda south of the junction of Southridge Trail and Diemer Trail. The 11-acre cactus scrub restoration project will help return this area to its previous condition and benefit OCTA Conservation Plan Covered Species coastal California gnatcatcher and cactus wren.