



In November, 2004, Los Angeles voters overwhelmingly passed Proposition O, a \$500 million bond to clean up and reuse polluted urban run-off. Proposals submitted to the Prop O Citizens Oversight Advisory Committee (COAC, which decides how the money will be spent) were to get funding based on:

- (a) quantifiable water pollution reduction; and
- (b) achieving multiple benefits such as creating open space, wildlife habitat and recharging groundwater supplies.

The Land Trust and Surfrider Foundation submitted a proposal to purchase land remaining at the Playa Vista site to create a wetland to clean regional urban run-off, recharge aquifers below the site, and restore habitat, and create ball fields that would act as basins to collect rain-water in the winter months. A good demonstration of this concept is in action in Irvine, CA. "www.naturaltreatmentsystem.org"

The Land Trust/Surfrider proposal was well-reviewed, receiving comments such as "strong project" and "critical site." Playa Vista, having attended most COAC meetings, however, has repeatedly stated that they are unwilling sellers. They were also unwilling sellers of the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve until they sold it to the State in 2003. Therefore, we have proof that if the price is right, they will sell.

So far, several COAC members have taken Playa Vista's word and voted down our proposal receiving a feasibility study (which determines whether and how much a project gets funded).

This area is so critical, we have suggested that the City strongly consider using its eminent domain powers. Coincidentally, LA Times' Magazine recently included an article about a salt marsh in Richmond, CA in which the regional park district used its eminent domain power to acquire 218 acres of the marsh.

Our proposal has demonstrated the weaknesses in the Prop O process:

- no final plan exists to clean up the City's urban run-off
- no process exists to scientifically evaluate water quality gains of proposed Prop O projects

A parallel LA County water quality improvement planning and implementation process is taking place right now, and its vision emphasizes regional, "green infrastructure" like treatment wetlands. We have been assured by Councilman Bill Rosendahl that our proposal will get a fair hearing in the second round of evaluation/funding. And we have also seen that the COAC recognizes that it must develop a plan and process to take a significant bite out of the water quality problem, or face fines for missing federally mandated deadlines and risk losing public support for a second (and likely third, fourth and fifth) Prop O. The second round begins in November, but we are hard at work building support for our proposal right now.

Much is at stake. A UCLA/Stanford study has proven that beach-goers risk getting sick just from going into the water - which has negative consequences for the local economy and health care costs.

To read more on Prop O, check out LA Weekly at

<http://www.laweekly.com/news/news/the-story-of-o/14260/>

The Ballona Wetlands Land Trust ('Land Trust')

founded in 1994, is a non-profit community organization dedicated to facilitating the public acquisition, restoration and preservation of the remaining Ballona Ecosystem.

We are Currently Working on:

Restoration of the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve. Our efforts are joined by volunteers every second Saturday of the month from 9-4pm. We are always looking for helping hands so check out our website to get more info.

Litigating against the City's approval of Playa Vista's Phase II

Advocating for the L.A. City to acquire Ballona land for a Treatment Wetland.

For more information please go to www.ballona.org.

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BALLONA ECOSYSTEM EDUCATION PROJECT "BEEP"

was founded in 1993 and is a non-profit tax deductible corporation and has worked to save the entire Ballona Ecosystem, through litigation, research and education. Our website has a great amount of background information about Ballona and it's surroundings, including

Current News--History--Restoration--Native Plants

Our Current Litigation Over Playa Vista Phase 2

Status of the open spaces that connect to Ballona

Breaking the Bank for the Wrong Bay Cleanup Plan

To learn more go, check out!

www.saveallofballona.org

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WHAT IS A WATERSHED?

Go to the Ballona Network's website and learn more!

<http://ballonanetwork.org/presentations/watershed.past-presentfuture.php>

To come along on our monthly (next is October 10th) Bus Tour and hikes through the hidden gems in the Ballona Watershed

email Jeanette@saveballona.org

or call: 310-721-3512