



P.O. Box 931057
Los Angeles, California 90093-1057

February 11, 2013

Ballona Wetlands Restoration Project
c/o Donna McCormick
1 Ada, Suite 100
Irvine, CA 92816

Dear Ms. McCormick:

After review of the revised Notice of Preparation and the executed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Annenberg Foundation, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission/Foundation, and State Coastal Conservancy, The Los Angeles Audubon Society opposes the inclusion of the proposed Annenberg interpretive center in area C of the Ballona Wetlands for the following reasons.

1. The MOU implies in its text that it is possible to recreate in sensitive habitats with pets (described as “proper techniques for recreating outdoors with pets in ways that are respectful of sensitive natural ecosystems, and allow humans, domestic animals, and wildlife to coexist”). Pets simply should not be brought to the Ballona Wetlands, and every effort should be made to remove stray or feral domestic species from the wetlands property.
2. It is not consistent with the purpose for which the property was purchased to include a companion animal adoption and veterinary facilities on it and Los Angeles Audubon finds this use to be highly inappropriate at this location.
3. The proposal was presented to the stakeholder community as a *fait accompli*. Los Angeles Audubon has run a successful education program in the Ballona Wetlands for more than twenty years, educating over 2,000 elementary school children per year. We have learned that the best way to teach people about the wetlands is to get them outside. We do not see a need for the proposed center that could not be met in other ways that do not involve construction on public land that was obtained for wildlife conservation.

The open spaces at Ballona are precious, and Area C is one of the few places left in Los Angeles where one can see Loggerhead Shrikes and White-tailed Kites, two species that have

been in steep decline on the coastal plain. As much of this land as possible should be restored to native vegetation, without the introduction of a new building and the attendant impacts.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Travis Longcore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and a long, sweeping underline.

Travis Longcore, Ph.D.
President

cc: California Department of Fish and Wildlife
State Coastal Conservancy
Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission
The Annenberg Foundation