

## FRIENDS OF COLORADO LAGOON LANDSCAPE VISION



Image 1: The Colorado Lagoon is an 18 acre tidal water body currently connected to Alamitos Bay and the Pacific Ocean through and underground concrete culvert to Marine Stadium. Originally part of the larger San Gabriel River Delta, commonly known as the Los Cerritos Wetlands, the lagoon is located in The City of Long Beach, approximately 20 miles south of downtown Los Angeles. The lagoon is an urban coastal salt marsh water body, which has withstood decades of development pressures.



Image 2: Generations of Long Beach residents enjoyed recreational and leisure activities such as swimming, model boat building and sailing; fishing, and picnicking. Its long history includes many fond childhood memories for Long Beach area resident. However, for decades the lagoon has suffered from deteriorating health due, in part, to the unrestricted flow of contaminants through its eleven storm drains. These conditions created that only worsened as the surrounding population increased dramatically during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



Image 3: In 1932 the lagoon was separated from Marine Stadium by a tide gate installed to maintain water depth for Olympic diving events that were held at the lagoon. In the late 1960's, the area between what is now the north end of Marine Stadium, and the south end of the lagoon, was filled in due to plans for a freeway and the existing underground box culvert was constructed. Re-connecting the lagoon with Alamitos Bay through an open channel is a primary goal of FOCL.



Image 4: The open channel connection is critical to the water quality of the lagoon as it allows for full tidal flushing and continuous aquatic habitat areas. The FOCL Landscape Vision lays out the guiding

principles and ambitious plans for the transformation of the lagoon from a recovering ecosystem to a beautiful, safe and flourishing marine habitat and recreational area.



Image 5: This urban wetland is unique to the region because of its proximity to densely populated areas. This image of the western arm reserves illustrates a future condition where a healthy natural system is integral to community life. The western arm is to become an ecological reserve providing a safe haven for marine related wildlife and provide viewing enjoyment for the public.



Image 6: Conceptual image of the “Community Nest,” essentially a nice place to sit and enjoy the view.



Image 7: Trails have the dual purpose of providing visitors with access to the site and protecting habitat areas from potential damage or disruption. Trails will be located in areas that maximize opportunities for high quality wildlife viewing and a variety of user experiences. Accessible pedestrian trails will accommodate a variety of user abilities. Naturalist-led walking tours are a part of FOCL’s education program and trails will be designed to intersect with the range of habitats that exist on the site.



Image 8: The lagoon’s context provides unique interpretive opportunities and increased visibility. Interpretive elements will focus on telling the story of the cultural and natural history of the place. The placement and content of interpretation will dovetail with visitor’s interests and programmed educational activities.



Image 9: Interpretive signage for the lagoon is conceived as a three part system: two-dimensional information communication including kiosks and panels, two-dimensional graphic communication including trail identification and directional signage, and connection to digital resources. Several logo options and signage styles were presented to FOCL. The chosen logo and signage style is intended to strengthen the identity of Colorado Lagoon.



Image 10: The most significant aspect of the FOCL Landscape Vision may be in helping local residents envision a future lagoon with healthy habitats. Pictured here is a rendering of an area, between the bridge and the golf course, that was a parking lot. The asphalt has been removed and the former parking spaces will someday grow into a biodiverse habitat. Considering that salt marshes rank among the most productive ecosystems on earth, the 1.3 acres of freshly un-paved earth is a considerable success story in the ongoing evolution of the Colorado Lagoon.