



**Puente Hills
Habitat Preservation Authority**

Endowment Provided by the Puente Hills Landfill

Agenda Item IX WCCA 5/8/17

April 25, 2017

The Honorable Senator Tony Mendoza
State Capitol, Room 5100
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: California Clean Water, Climate, Coastal-Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (AB18 Garcia) and the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (SB5 De León)

Dear Senator Mendoza:

It was a pleasure meeting you in January at your State of Education Address. Thank you for your leadership for the 32nd District.

The Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority, Habitat Authority, is a joint powers authority established pursuant to California Government Code Section 6500 *et seq.* with a Board of Directors representing the City of Whittier, County of Los Angeles, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, and the Hacienda Heights Improvement Association. According to its mission, the Habitat Authority is dedicated to the acquisition, restoration, and management of open space in the Puente Hills for preservation of the land in perpetuity, with the primary purpose to protect the biological diversity. Additionally, the agency endeavors to provide opportunities for outdoor education and low-impact recreation.

The Habitat Authority owns and or manages over 3,800 acres (the Puente Hills Preserve) which lie within the cities of Whittier and La Habra Heights, as well as in the County unincorporated areas of the Puente Hills known as Hacienda Heights and Rowland Heights. The Preserve also acts as a valuable resource for the greater region especially for residents in nearby park-poor communities of Norwalk, Montebello, Downey, Santa Fe Springs, Pico Rivera and others. The Preserve is regionally unique in that it provides hiking, biking and equestrian trail nature-oriented experiences where families can have the opportunities to see hawks, owls, bats, bobcats, mule deer, and enjoy the shade of native oak, walnut and sycamore trees. The Preserve has roughly 950,000 trail visitations a year.

The Preserve is within an area called the Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor that expands from Whittier Narrows to the Cleveland National Forest. The Habitat Authority has 22 miles of trails and provide outdoor education programming for approximately 3,000 individuals a year. Additionally the Habitat Authority has restored 200 acres to native habitat and is in the process of restoring 80 more acres. Also, in partnership with many agencies we lead the effort to install Los Angeles County's first purpose-built wildlife underpass.

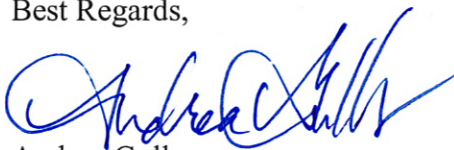
Our current funding is primarily from the proceeds of an endowment the agency established principally from allocations of tipping fees from the Puente Hills Landfill. Those annual tipping fees ceased in 2013 with the closure of the landfill. The Habitat Authority does not receive taxes, assessments or public fees to fund its endeavors.

We'd like to continue to do what we do with the opportunity to have funds from the above mentioned bills accessible to local government organizations such as ours. I have attached the bills with strikethrough edits of specific new language for consideration to open grants and funding allocations to joint powers authorities whose core missions are consistent with these bills. The list below is where these suggestions can be found in the attachments for your consideration.

AB 18 Article 3	SB 5 Chapter 3
Section 5882.02 (b)(1)	Section 80061 (b)
Section 5882.06 (a)	Section 80062 (b)(1)
Section 5886.05 (a)	Section 80063 (a)
	Section 80113

Again, thank you for your consideration and support of nature preserves, trails, and park management in your district. Also, I have attached a few photos of interest. If your schedule allows, we would enjoy providing a tour of the hills for you and your staff, and I'm available at your convenience for further discussion at agullo@habitatauthority.org or (562) 945-9003.

Best Regards,



Andrea Gullo
Executive Director

C: Habitat Authority Board of Directors
Assembly Majority Leader Ian Calderon
Assembly Member Garcia
Senator De León