

Experience the exotic
PANAMA CANAL




Holland
America Line

GREEN NOTES

[Press Telegram Home](#) [Green Notes Home](#)

About the authors



Joe Segura, a mild-mannered reporter for a major metropolitan newspaper, has covered Gotham City,

er Long Beach, for 34 years. During his very, very long -- endless -- tenure, he's covered almost every beat, and he was the main writer for BeachWeek, which focused on life and lifestyles of the shoreline communities from downtown Long Beach to the Huntington Beach pier.

He's also been keenly interested in environmental issues, long before green became fashionable, writing extensively about the battles to save Bolsa Chica (Huntington Beach), Hellman (Seal Beach) and Los Cerritos (Long Beach) wetlands.

E-mail Joe at joe.segura@presstelegram.com.

About this Entry

This page contains a single entry by [Joe Segura](#) published on *October 8, 2009 7:19 PM*.

[SeaPort Marina project site to be reviewed Oct. 7](#) was the previous entry in this blog.

[Video: Councilwoman Schipske talks about wetlands land-swap](#) is the next entry in this blog.

Find recent content on the [main index](#) or look in the [archives](#) to find all content.

 [Subscribe to this blog's feed](#)

Zoning hearing Monday on Los Cerritos buffer

[Previous Entry](#) | [Next Entry](#)

By [Joe Segura](#) on October 8, 2009 7:19 PM | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

A zoning project planner will review proposals Monday to restore a buffer area near Los Cerritos Wetlands.

The 2 p.m. hearing is set for the Long Beach City Council Chambers, 333 W. Ocean Blvd. Testimony could consist mainly of a debate of whether the buffer area is part of the wetlands ecosystem

Jeff Winklepleck, zoning project planner, described the project at 6400 Loynes Drive, as needing "approval to allow the import of approximately 1,000 cubic yards of soil to re-establish and maintain the cap over the existing landfill in response to California Coastal Commission emergency permit. An approval to allow weed abatement to comply with a Fire Department order is also requested."

The property owner, Sean Hitchcock, contends the area is not sensitive habitat -- and he's produced both a biological review and a peer review.

PCR Services Corporation (PCR) conducted a peer review of the May 28. It reported: "Biological Resources Evaluation and Jurisdictional Waters Delineation ... report prepared by SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA), for the "project site" located west of the intersection of Studebaker Road and Loynes Drive... The primary purpose of this peer review was to ensure that it meets the requirements of a jurisdictional delineation as warranted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) survey and reporting standards.

"PCR Senior Wetland Ecologist Richard Haywood conducted an assessment of the project site on July 20, to confirm the project site's conditions. Upon reviewing SWCA's Biological Resources Evaluation and Jurisdictional Waters Delineation ... and based on the findings of the site visit conducted by PCR, PCR was able to confirm that the findings in the SWCA report are consistent with the ACOE, CDFG, and RWQCB survey and reporting standards. No "waters of the U.S.," "waters of the State," or CDFG jurisdictional waters occur on the project site.

"PCR also researched the project site to determine if it is subject to any regulations by the California Coastal Commission (CCC) through the City's Local Coastal Program (LCP). The project site is within the City's Southeast Area Development and Improvement Plan (SEADIP). The City's LCP does not identify the project site as an environmentally sensitive habitat area (ESHA).

"The CCC defines wetlands slightly differently than the ACOE. Whereas the ACOE utilizes a 'three parameter definition,' that requires the presence of wetland hydrology, hydric soils and a plant community with a predominance of hydrophytic vegetation, the CCC uses a 'one parameter' definition requiring evidence of only one of the above-mentioned parameters in order for it to qualify as a wetland. Based on the initial site assessment



conducted on July 20, PCR determined that the project site did not support a plant community with dominance of wetland indicator plant species, and lacked indicators of sufficient hydrology to support a wetland system.

"1 City of Long Beach Department of Planning and Building. 1980. City of Long Beach Local Coastal Program, An Element of the City General Plan. Includes Conditions and Amendments through January 1994. Reprinted 2003.

"The plant species and plant communities observed on the project site were consistent with the species identified in the SWCA report, and are typical of disturbed areas. While many of these species are classified as facultative wetland indicator species, they are often considered weed species which are common in upland, disturbed areas. Further, most vegetated areas of the project site had plant communities with an herbaceous component, a large percentage of which was comprised of upland grass species including red brome (*Bromus madritensis*), Ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), and wild oat (*Avena barbata*), or exotic species such as Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), iceplant (*Mesembryanthemum crystallinum*), and star thistle (*Centaurea* sp.). The presence of these and other upland species precluded the presence of a plant community with a predominance of wetland indicator plant species.

"The hydrology of the project site appeared limited to precipitation and street runoff from Loynes Drive, which appears to discharge local street runoff onto the northern portion of the project site via two concrete v-ditches. PCR did not review the project site's location within its local watershed, or the effects (if any) of tidal influence, or groundwater movement through the area. As such, we cannot determine if the Los Cerritos Channel (the "Channel"), located parallel to the southern boundary of the project site, approximately 65 feet to the south, may influence local hydrology on the project site. However, an existing gravel road, located between and directly abutting both the Channel and the project site, as well as the ground surface on the project site itself, lacked any visible evidence of surface flow or flooding that could be attributed to the Channel. As such, PCR concluded that if the Channel were to influence the surface hydrology on the project site it would likely occur at such an infrequent and irregular occurrence interval that it would not support a wetland system on the project site. The potential effect of ground water is addressed in the soils discussion, below.

"To determine if hydric soils were present on the project site PCR conducted a second site inspection on August 18.

"2 To assess the soils on the project site PCR took several soil cores throughout the project site. Because the majority of the project site has undergone significant earthwork, the areas targeted for these soil cores are located around the perimeter of the project site, which appeared relatively undisturbed from recent activities. One soil core was taken in the interior of the project site, but because of the aforementioned earthwork no sample could be accurately obtained. Please note that due to the history of the project site, as outlined in the SWCA report, the entire site was considered likely to have disturbed soils.

"2 Please note that this determination is based upon a two site visits that occurred within a period of approximately one month. If the channel regularly overtops its banks resulting in local flooding, and if corrective measures are regularly undertaken to repair related flooding damage from the Channel, PCR is not aware of them, and therefore the conclusions reached in this discussion may need to be revised. However, no evidence of flooding or flow attributable to the Channel was observed on the project site.

"Soil Core 1 Location: Along southern boundary, just west of center of the boundary line. Approximately 12 feet from the fence.

"While Soil Core 1 becomes a depleted matrix at a depth of 10 inches this is too deep and lacks sufficient redoximorphic features (mottles) to be considered a hydric soil as either an F3 Depleted Matrix or a S5. Sandy Redox soil, and is therefore considered an upland soil.

"Soil Core 2 Location: Along southern boundary, near westernmost corner. Approximately 10 feet from the fence.

"Soil Core 2 should be classified as a F3 Depleted Matrix soil due to its low chroma and redoximorphic features. Therefore, this should be considered a hydric soil.

"Soil Core 3 Location: Along western boundary, approximately 1/3 distance north from southern boundary.

"Approximately 25 feet from the property line. Within a natural depression at the edge of earthwork.

"Soil Core 3 should be considered an upland soil. Although significant redoximorphic features were identified the primary soil matrix color is too bright (chroma of 3).

"Soil cores 1 and 3 should not be considered hydric soils due to a lack of sufficient hydric soil indicators observed. However, some indicators suggest either ground water or possibly subsurface water, originating from precipitation and stormwater runoff collected on the project site which subsequently percolates down into the soil column from the surface and moves (horizontally) through the project site.

"Soil Core 2 was the only hydric soil identified on the project site. Its location within a small depression likely allows water to pool during seasonal rains for a duration long enough to generate anaerobic conditions within the surface soil horizons, and therefore creating a hydric soil. A thin siltation layer (3-4 mm thick), and some salt crust build up, produced through evaporation, further support this determination. The lack of a predominantly hydrophytic plant community precludes the area as being considered an ACOE wetland; however, under the CCC one parameter rule this area may be considered jurisdictional. However, because of the distinct separation of the project site from the Los Cerritos Channel, and because of the local topography within which the hydric soil was identified it is likely that these hydric soils developed independently from any coastal influence.

Leave a comment

Name

Email Address

URL

Remember personal info?

Comments (You may use HTML tags for style)