

Communication from Public

Name: Marcia Hanscom - Defend Ballona Wetlands & Ballona Wetlands Institute

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Council File No: 22-0392

Comments for Public Posting: Please see comments in the attached file. Please remove the billboards in the Ballona Wetlands area due to ecological concerns.



**DEFEND
BALLONA
WETLANDS**



BALLONA INSTITUTE
restoration, research, education, artistic expression



November 7, 2023

Los Angeles City Council
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Submitted via email at <http://lacouncilcomment.com/>

RE: Council File 22-0392, Transportation Communications Network (TCN)

Dear Los Angeles City Council – PLUM Committee and ALL City Council & Mayor Bass:

On behalf of the community coalition, Defend Ballona Wetlands and Ballona Wetlands Institute, we write to request that the digital billboards (double-facing – i.e., 2 billboards) contemplated next to the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve be removed from your consideration for approval.

Not only are there 8 endangered species and more than 20 species on the California List of Species of Special Concern relying on this ecological reserve, but there is a diversity of species that exists nowhere else on the southern California coast. Additionally, there are night roosting locations in trees located in the Del Rey community just to the east of the location of these proposed billboards, and the Owls that roost there are nocturnal species which need darkness for hunting.

These Owls (Barn Owls, Great Horned Owls and Short-eared Owls) fly right near and in the location where the billboards would be placed – and they would be harmed and likely unable to survive without being able to hunt for their food with their eyesight disrupted from the lit-up digital billboards. We are informed that the boards might be turned off at midnight – that might work for humans, but not for the nocturnal species that begin hunting during the crepuscular hours of dusk and dawn, and some throughout the night.

Besides the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve being the only state ecological reserve in Los Angeles County, there are privately owned wetlands immediately adjacent to where these billboards would be placed, and those wetlands were defended in Superior Court and the CA

Appeals Court by the LA City Attorney when the private landowner attempted to re-zone the land for a parking lot. As well, there are delineated wetlands on the CalTrans property either exactly on or immediately adjacent lands to where the billboards would be placed. These wetland areas are used by Red-shouldered Hawk, Barn Owl and numerous other species whose lifecycles would be disrupted by both the construction of and the lighting of these billboards.

The ecological consequences of Light Pollution are well documented – for example:

<https://islandpress.org/books/ecological-consequences-artificial-night-lighting>

Likewise, we would like to advocate for removing the proposed digital billboards contemplated for the area near the Sepulveda Wildlife area, as well as any other sensitive regions.

We are puzzled as to why billboard operators and City Planning have persistently and regularly attempted to install digital and/or lit-up billboards at the Ballona Wetlands. Please remove this site from your approval. And also please reconsider whether or not these digital billboards are the best way to bring revenue to the City.

With best regards ~

Marcia Hanscom /s/

Marcia Hanscom

Community Organizer

Defend Ballona Wetlands ~ a community coalition

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Robert J. van de Hoek /s/

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