

Communication from Public

Name: Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife (CLAW)
Date Submitted: 11/27/2020 05:02 PM
Council File No: 13-1339
Comments for Public Posting: Support If Amended



CITIZENS FOR
LOS ANGELES
WILDLIFE

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November 27, 2020

Councilmember Bob Blumenfield, Chair
Public Works and Gang Reduction Committee (PWGR)
LA City Council c/o City Clerk
200 North Spring St, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: **Support** for adding “shrubs” to the Protected Tree Ordinance (CF-13-1339) **if amended**

Honorable Chair Blumenfield and PWGR committee members:

Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife (CLAW) is a non-profit environmental organization concerned with the wellbeing of wildlife and wildlife habitat for the City of Los Angeles and beyond. A citizenry of more than 5000 individuals support our organization’s multiple calls for biodiverse practices and policy to benefit LA City, County, California and the globe. That is why we applaud the efforts of the Planning Department, city leaders, and thoughtful constituents to expand the protected tree ordinance to include Mexican elderberry and toyon.

Native toyon and elderberry make a unique and significant contribution to land throughout LA City including the Santa Monica Mountains' composition of chaparral vegetation and woodlands. The intermediate height of both species fills in a vertical niche in chaparral ecosystems which benefits mammals and herpetofauna with shade, and benefits birds with elevated perching and nesting sites. The berry fruits and seeds of both species are food for many birds and mammals. Because both species have higher moisture requirements than most chaparral species, their presence indicates a microsite with favorable soil, moisture, and aspect. Chaparral sub-communities that contain either of these two species have a higher wildlife habitat value per acre.

Because toyon and elderberry provide such high habitat value, CLAW urges you to adopt a multi-stem, cumulative measurement of 4 inch diameter at breast height (4.5 feet). The current language of the toyon and elderberry (“shrub”) ordinance must be amended with a measurement standard that, in a professional way, aligns with the rest of the Protected Tree Ordinance. It is imperative to

replace the language that oddly applies a single stem measurement, which is a metric that is unsuitable for multi-stem species and will result in the protection of fewer toyon and elderberry. Please take this opportunity to exercise your leadership and amend this ordinance in a way that will protect as many trees as possible. Opportunities to make such a lasting change don't come along often, and we must seize this moment and take the most aggressive path to protect our trees most effectively for future generations. Such an approach is always in the best interest of the public, as a healthy environment is something that benefits every single resident in Los Angeles.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony T.", is centered on a light gray rectangular background.

Tony Tucci, Chair

CLAW is a public benefit non-profit 501(c)(3) environmental organization that works to protect and restore the environments of wildlife of Los Angeles and California from dwindling open spaces. Our mission is to promote, educate and protect the fundamental importance of wildlife, wildlife habitats and wildlife corridors everywhere.