

Communication from Public

Name: Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife (CLAW)
Date Submitted: 10/29/2021 05:40 PM
Council File No: 21-0828
Comments for Public Posting: See attached letter



CITIZENS FOR
LOS ANGELES
WILDLIFE

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October 29, 2021

Councilmember John Lee, Chair
Arts, Parks, Health, Education, and Neighborhoods (APHEN)
LA City Council c/o City Clerk
200 North Spring St, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: LA Zoo's Vision Plan Project (CF-21-0828); Support for Alternative 1

Honorable Councilmember Lee and APHEN 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. CLAW is deeply concerned over the proposed makeover of the LA Zoo, and urges support of Alternative 1 as described in the Project's Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR).

The LA Zoo's mission includes a mandate to "support programs that preserve biodiversity and conserve natural habitat." Unfortunately, the Zoo appears to be forsaking their mission in order to create what many news outlets accurately describe as a "theme park." At the expense of this expansion is the destruction of 25 acres of critical habitat in the eastern Santa Monica Mountains.


CLAW robustly supports Alternative 1 (the Reduced Project Alternative) as an environmentally superior alternative in the FEIR. In contrast, CLAW strongly opposes both the proposed Project and Alternative 2, which both essentially have the same permanent deleterious impacts on the Griffith Park ecosystem, and thus the ecological health of the interconnected Rim of the Valley ecosystem.

The FEIR Mitigation Measures BIO 1-5 completely fail to compensate for the loss of approximately 25 acres of native habitat, the direct brushing impacts outside the Zoo, and the indirect edge effects beyond the Zoo boundary. Any FEIR description of habitat restoration is vague in respect to quality, duration, performance, and location. All restoration mitigation outside of the Zoo boundary is thus deferred and inadequate.

Native habitat within the Zoo boundary serves as a critical buffer for the Griffith Park core habitat and is key habitat for many native species, including LA's mascot of the wild, the mountain lion known as P-22. As this population of mountain lions is currently under candidacy for protection under the California Endangered Species Act, the land in question can accurately be described as crucially important endangered species habitat. The loss of this habitat buffer and forage area for prey species represents an unmitigable significant adverse impact to the sustainability of existing and future mountain lion populations in the Griffith Park ecosystem. The FEIR fails to address how the ecological carrying capacity of the Griffith Park ecosystem will continue to decline as global warming amplifies. In this warming and drying context and with increased human and pet presence in Griffith Park, the ecological value of every acre of habitat will increase every year for the long foreseeable future.

The irony of destroying native habitat (cutting a ridgeline down 60 feet to bedrock) to create a California Species Zone plastered with human entertainment attractions is difficult to fathom. The existing native habitat should instead be intensively enhanced to provide a southwest flank and one large peninsula of functioning Mediterranean ecosystem within the Zoo itself. If we really want to impress the world during the Olympics, let us showcase our city's progressive stance in environmental protection as opposed to building another amusement park.

We urge the City Council to reject all alternatives that remove more than two acres of native habitat from within the Zoo boundary or require more than an acre of permanent brush clearance on Recreation and Parks' property. As it stands, Alternative 1 is the only viable option that meets this criteria.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony T.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tony Tucci, Chair

Communication from Public

Name: Rachel Kaminer
Date Submitted: 10/29/2021 07:04 PM
Council File No: 21-0828

Comments for Public Posting: I'm a resident of Los Angeles. I support "Alternative 1," which I believe is the only reasonable option. First and foremost, we must prevent irreversible environmental destruction while we can. I am also concerned about the impact that expansion will have on transport in Los Angeles. The Zoo is difficult to access by public transportation, and the proposals to improve access are unconvincing; I say this as a frequent user of public transportation, including transit to and from Griffith Park. The location is already difficult to access by car, as well, due to the heavy traffic. The local streets and neighborhoods will be impacted negatively both during and after construction. The Zoo's "20-Year" vision is outdated on so many levels. It betrays a limited imagination about the future of zoos, the future of tourism, the future of transportation, and the future of local engagement with the Zoo. By 2041, this vision will be beyond outdated--it will be recognizably regressive and harmful. I'm not convinced that Alternative 1 will stand the test of time, either, but at least it won't wreck the native woodlands.

Communication from Public

Name: Kris Sullivan

Date Submitted: 10/29/2021 06:08 AM

Council File No: 21-0828

Comments for Public Posting: Please support Alternative 1 of the Zoo Expansion Plan. It is much less destructive of the natural landscape since it avoids the destruction of hundreds of native and City-protected trees. It won't include a vineyard which should not be created in a time of severe drought and the need to preserve water supplies in LA. It includes the important updates in animal care which is what the zoo is supposed to be about. And this alternative does not include an aerial tram which is an entertainment feature masquerading as a transportation route.

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 10/29/2021 07:39 PM

Council File No: 21-0828

Comments for Public Posting: I have been a member of Los Angeles county my entire life and would like to support ALTERNATIVE 1 option only for zoo expansion in order not destroy the 23 acres of native Los Angeles habitat, which includes 227 City-protected trees. Through Alternative 1, the LA Zoo can still achieve better animal care and other necessities for animal preservation, as well as serve the public and its entertainment interests. As the zoo is built on the foundation of conservation, we must continue to respect and preserve Southern California's nature wildlife instead of destroying it. I vote no to the proposed zoo expansion and vote yes to alternative #1.