

Community Members Protest to Block the Bulldozing of LA's Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve

Defend Ballona Wetlands community members say heavy machinery must be kept out of this crucial ecosystem.

MARINA DEL REY, CA, UNITED STATES, July 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Concerned community members, united under the [Defend Ballona Wetlands](#) banner, will hold a news conference and rally at 5:30pm on Thursday, July 9th ahead of a crucial meeting being held by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.



Egrets in LA's Ballona Wetlands. Photo courtesy Jonathan Coffin

The community's message is: NO to the plan being proposed by CDFW to bulldoze the Ballona Wetlands in the name of "restoration." Marcia Hanscom, founder of Defend Ballona Wetlands, declared, "The people of California want to send a strong message to all agencies involved, namely: destruction is not restoration. We want this land protected, not bulldozed. That is why the state paid \$139 million for the land in 2002, to protect the land and the wildlife relying on this fragile landscape."

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Marcia Hanscom, Defend Ballona Wetlands

Three years ago, [a judge invalidated the CDFW plan's Environmental Impact Report](#). Now, residents fear the agency is coming back with a revised plan that also involves using heavy machinery to clear out the wetlands.

The California Department of Fish & Wildlife's public meeting says it is designed to help the agency determine how to manage the public's land at LA's Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve, approximately one square mile near the Pacific Ocean that thousands of wild animals call home.

That wildlife has nowhere else to go as surrounding areas are extremely developed.

CDFW officials are asking questions like "What does 'protect' mean to you?"

To that, community members opposed to the massive bulldozing project being advocated as a "restoration" by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, have the following responses, which they will articulate during the meeting and at the news conference.

To us, 'protect' means NO to heavy machinery, which the CDFW plan calls for.

To us, 'protect' means NO to a decade of land clearing, at a cost of 400-million public dollars and the loss of wildlife. [Currently, 1,700 species of wildlife call the Ballona Wetlands home.](#) They have nowhere else to go as the surrounding areas are very developed.

Defend Ballona Wetlands has proposed a 20-point Gentle Restoration that achieves all the legitimate goals of restoration without the use of any heavy machinery.

Community members will emphasize the need for mindful public access, respecting and protecting native soils, respecting Indigenous life-ways, protecting imperiled and treasured wildlife and avoiding - at all costs- the use of heavy machinery and industrial-scale destruction, which CDFW's so-called "restoration" calls for.



This owl lives in the Ballona Wetlands and would lose his home if it is bulldozed.



Protest again phony "restoration" that would bulldoze LA's Ballona Wetlands



Least Bell's Vireo - *Vireo bellii pusillus*

The community's recommendations include:

Undertake and complete a thorough baseline survey of all flora and fauna.

Determine requirements for protection of all rare, threatened and endangered species.

No heavy equipment (including bulldozers/excavators) that disturb fragile soils.

Persuade state decision-makers to cease transporting and injecting fossil gas at Ballona.

Manage the land in a gentle fashion, protecting from outside harms, including fireworks.

Convene monthly meetings with all stakeholders, CDFW and other relevant agencies.

Study and learn from how the ecosystem is currently working – involve local schools.

Refer to the Interim Management and Public Access report that was completed years ago, and work with stakeholders to identify which potential trails could be opened and open them!

Form an Indigenous Tribal Council for Ballona (and learn from them) consisting of elders of the indigenous people for the LA coast, which would guide decisions for Ballona.

Form recovery teams to recover compatible species, such as Roadrunner, Jack Rabbit, California Quail, Horned Lizard, Garter Snake; Ballona Cinquefoil, Saltmarsh Bird's Beak.

Consider placement and construction of three overlook towers on the Ballona Creek levees – one each near Area C, Area A

and Area B – providing views into and across the landscape of the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve. Would be wheelchair & senior-citizen accessible.

News Conference & Rally

Event: Citizens Gather in Green to Speak for Wildlife

Date/Time: Thursday, July 9th, 5:30pm

Location: 7166 W Manchester Ave, Los Angeles, California 90045

Contact: Marcia Hanscom, Defend Ballona Wetlands

578 Washington Blvd, Suite 759, Marina Del Rey, Ca. 90292

Photos on DefendBallonaWetlands are approved for media re-publication



Marcia Hanscom
Defend Ballona Wetlands
+1 310-877-2634
[email us here](#)
Visit us on social media:
[Facebook](#)

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