Puente Hills
Habitat Preservation Authority
Endowment Provided by the Puente Hills Landfill

HABITAT AUTHORITY
CELEBRATING 20 Years
Preservation, Restoration, and Education

July 16, 2014

Connie Chung, AICP, Supervising Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1356
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Los Angeles County General Plan Update

Dear Ms. Chung:

The Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (Habitat Authority) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR; SCH#2011081042) for the Los Angeles County General Plan Update (General Plan Update) dated June 19, 2014.

The Habitat Authority is a joint powers authority established pursuant to California Government Code Section 6500 *et seq*. with a Board of Directors consisting of the City of Whittier, County of Los Angeles, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, and the Hacienda Heights Improvement Association. According to its mission, the Habitat Authority is dedicated to the acquisition, restoration, and management of open space in the Puente Hills for preservation of the land in perpetuity, with the primary purpose to protect the biological diversity. Additionally, the agency endeavors to provide opportunities for outdoor education and low-impact recreation. The Habitat Authority owns and or manages over 3,800 acres which lie within the Cities of Whittier and La Habra Heights, as well as in the County unincorporated areas of the Puente Hills known as Hacienda Heights and Rowland Heights.

Please accept the following comment regarding impact 5.4-4 "The Proposed Project would affect wildlife movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites".

Due to the importance of wildlife corridors and nursery sites, please consider requiring additional mitigation measures, especially if the Project is in a Significant Ecological Area (SEA), in order to mitigate a Project to Less Than Significant.

It is clear from the language in the Draft General Plan that wildlife movement corridors and habitat connectivity are critical to the concept of SEAs. Appendix E of the General Plan Update acknowledges the importance of wildlife corridors and natural resources stating "Biological resources are important in a regional context, serving to connect resources in adjacent local jurisdictions. Critical biological resources are maintained through habitat connectivity, which sustains population genetic diversity, and provides refuge for migrant species." The SEA Designation Principles of this appendix also state that the intent of SEAs are to provide habitat linkages between core habitats.

However, the DEIR determined that even with mitigation measure BIO-1 and updates to the SEA Ordinance, certain projects may not be able to avoid or minimize impacts and do not provide mitigation for loss of wildlife movement or nursery sites. Due to the County's recognition of the importance of wildlife corridors, please exhort efforts to mitigate impacts to regional wildlife linkages and nursery sites to Less Than Significant.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the DEIR for the Los Angeles County General Plan Update. Please notify us when related documents are available for public review.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. Feel free to contact me or Lizette Longacre, Ecologist, at (562) 945-9003 for further discussion.

Sincerely,

Bob Henderson
Chairman

cc: Board of Directors
Citizens Technical Advisory Committee