



MEMORANDUM

June 22, 2022

To: Members of the Board of Directors

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: **Environmental Mitigation Program Coastal Fire Impacts Status Update**

This memorandum is a follow up to an earlier memorandum on this topic. The Coastal Fire in the cities of Laguna Beach and Laguna Niguel (in the Aliso Canyon) burned approximately 200 acres between May 11-17, 2022. The fire destroyed 20 homes and damaged 11. The Coastal Fire impacts on the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) owned Pacific Horizon Preserve (Preserve) have been mapped and are attached. A summary of the impacts, post fire response, and next steps are provided below.

The fire and associated suppression activities impacted approximately 35 acres of the 151-acre OCTA Pacific Horizon Preserve. This Preserve is one of seven owned by OCTA and was acquired in 2015 as part of the Measure M2 Environmental Mitigation Program. Habitat impacted includes chaparral scrub, southern mixed chaparral, mixed sage as well as some rare plants. As part of the fire response, containment lines (bulldozer and hand crew) were placed across the Preserve, which accounts for a small portion of the impacts. However, the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) repaired the containment lines by placing unburned cut vegetation and debris over the lines. The cause of the fire is currently under investigation.

OCTA is not required to restore the burned vegetation on the Preserve but will be responsible for monitoring and controlling any invasive weeds that may grow in the area. Fencing and signage has been placed on the OCTA Preserve to keep the public from entering the burn area. Staff will continue to coordinate with Orange County Parks (OC Parks), as well as the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Wildlife Agencies), on potential restoration and erosion control tasks for the Preserve. While not required, this may prove to be more cost effective in the overall management of the Preserve depending on habitat recovery.

Staff will continue to monitor the property and update the Environmental Oversight Committee and Board if additional tasks are warranted. Please contact Kia Mortazavi, Executive Director, Planning, at (714) 560-5741 for additional information.

DEJ:lh
Attachment

c: Environmental Oversight Committee

