

MINUTE ITEM

This Calendar Item No. 02
was approved as Minute Item
No. 2 by the State Lands
Commission by a vote of 3
to 0 at its 4-7-81
meeting.

CALENDAR ITEM

002

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W 21547
PRC 5953
Loufe

PUBLIC AGENCY PERMIT

APPLICANTS: County of San Diego
Department of Sanitation and Flood Control
55.5 Overland Avenue
San Diego, California 92123
and
California Department of Fish and Game
1416 Ninth Street
Sacramento, California 95814

AREA, TYPE LAND AND LOCATION:
Interests of the State in tide and submerged
land in San Elijo Lagoon, San Diego County.

LAND USE: Regional Park and Wildlife Sanctuary.

TERMS OF PROPOSED PERMIT:
Initial period: 49 years from September 1,
1977.

CONSIDERATION: The public benefit, with the State reserving
the right at any time to set a monetary
rental if the Commission finds such action
to be in the State's best interest.

PREREQUISITE TERMS, FEES AND EXPENSES:
Applicant is permittee of upland.

Processing costs have been received.

STATUTORY AND OTHER REFERENCES:
A. P.R.C.: Div. 6, Parts 1 & 2.

B. Cal. Admin. Code: Title 2, Div. 3.

OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:
1. A final environmental impact report
was prepared by the San Diego County
Environmental Review Board, pursuant
to CEQA and implementing regulations.
A Notice of Determination has been
received. In addition, a Coastal Zone
permit has been obtained for this project.

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2. This project is situated on State land identified as possessing significant environmental values pursuant to P.R.C. 6370.1, and is classified in a use category, Class B, which authorizes Limited Use.

Staff has coordinated this project with those agencies and organizations which nominated the site as containing significant environmental values. They have found this project to be compatible with their nomination.

3. The County of San Diego and the Department of Fish and Game are in the process of entering into a cooperative management agreement for implementation of the project.

EXHIBITS: A. Land Description.
 B. Location Map.
 C. EIR Summary.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMISSION:

1. DETERMINE THAT AN EIR HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR THIS PROJECT AND CERTIFIED BY THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW BOARD ON JUNE 23, 1977.
2. CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE EIR OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW BOARD HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND CONSIDERED BY THE COMMISSION.
3. DETERMINE THAT THE PROJECT WILL NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT.
4. DETERMINE THAT THIS PROJECT IS CONSISTENT WITH THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 6.5, OF TITLE 2, OF THE CAL. ADM. CODE.
5. FIND THAT GRANTING OF THE PERMIT WILL HAVE NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECT UPON ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS IDENTIFIED PURSUANT TO SECTION 6370.1, OF THE P.R.C.
6. AUTHORIZE ISSUANCE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, DEPARTMENT OF SANITATION AND FLOOD CONTROL AND THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME; OF A 49-YEAR PUBLIC AGENCY

CALENDAR ITEM NO. 02 (CONTD.)

PERMIT FROM SEPTEMBER 1, 1977; COVERING INTERESTS OF THE STATE IN SAN ELIJO LAGOON; IN CONSIDERATION OF THE PUBLIC BENEFIT, WITH THE STATE RESERVING THE RIGHT AT ANY TIME TO SET A MONETARY RENTAL IF THE COMMISSION FINDS SUCH ACTION TO BE IN THE STATE'S BEST INTEREST; FOR A REGIONAL PARK AND WILDLIFE SANCTUARY, ON THE LAND DESCRIBED ON EXHIBIT "A" ATTACHED AND BY REFERENCE MADE A PART HEREOF.

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EXHIBIT "A"

LAND DESCRIPTION

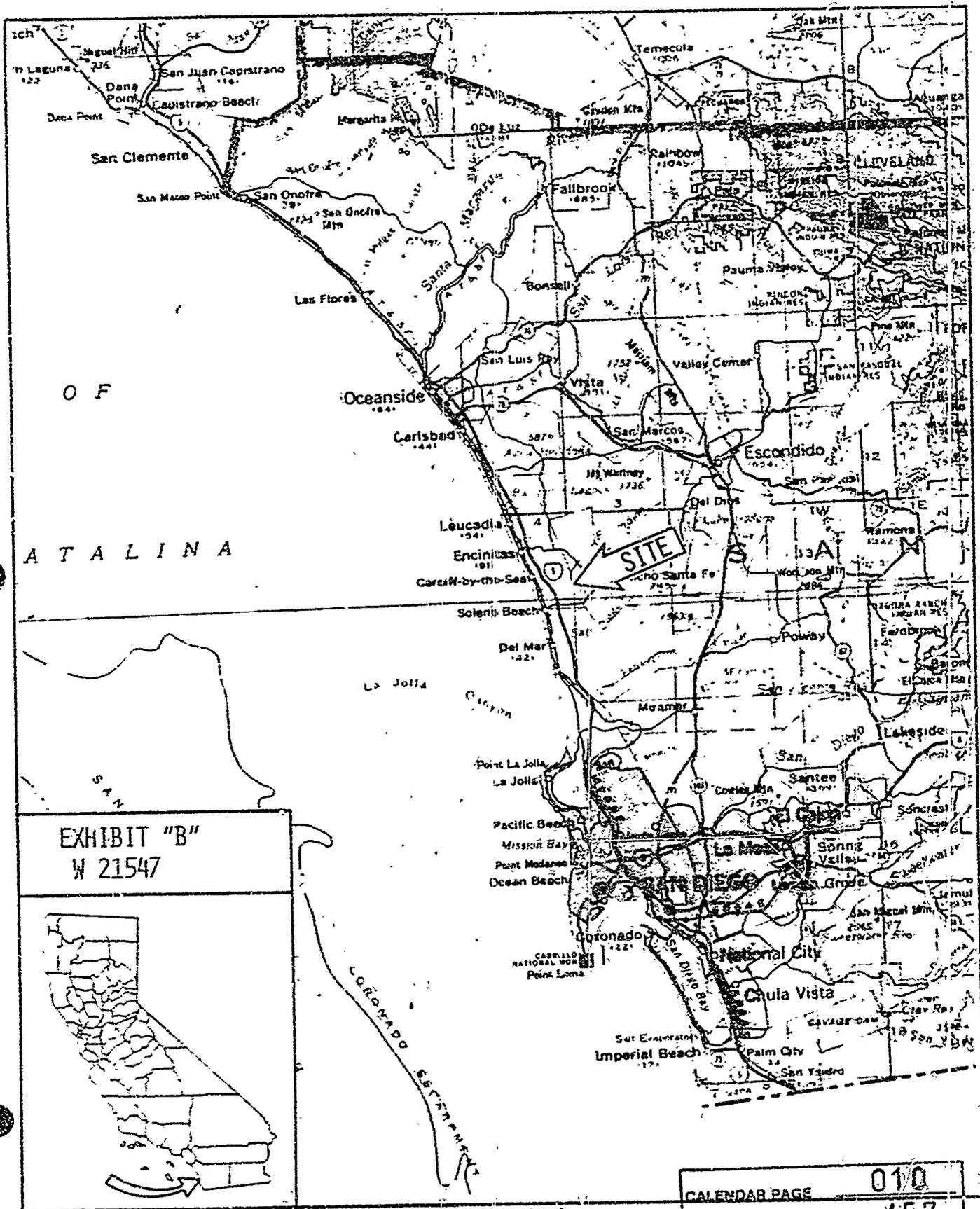
W 21547

All the tide and submerged land in the bed of San Elijo Lagoon, Sections 25 and 26, T13S, R4W, S8M, San Diego County, State of California, within the exterior boundaries of these certain parcels of lands described in deeds to the County of San Diego recorded June 10, 1975, as File/Page No. 75-143027 of Official Records; September 24, 1976, as File/Page No. 76-314862 of Official Records; September 24, 1976, as File/Page No. 76-314860 of Official Records; March 4, 1977, as File/Page 77-079544 of Official Records; July 3, 1973, as File/Page 73-134210 of Official Records, in the office of the Recorder of San Diego County.

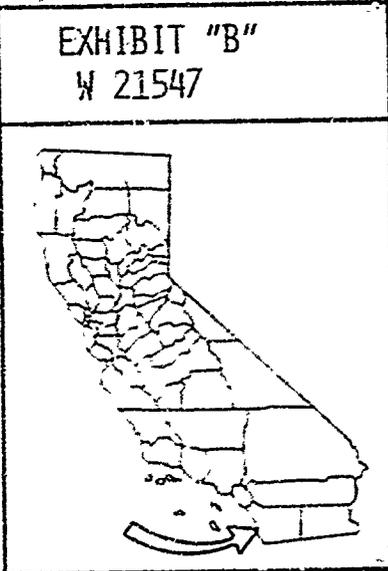
END OF DESCRIPTION

Prepared *AJ Lopez* Checked *AJ Lopez*
Reviewed *DE Schlesselman* Date *8/2/77*

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O F
A T A L I N A



I. Introduction

Following is a summary of an environmental impact report prepared by staff of the County of San Diego for implementation of the San Elijo Lagoon East Basin Water Management Plan.

II. Project Description

The proposed project is for the implementation of the San Elijo Lagoon East Basin Water Management Plan. The project will include modification of the existing wetland by cutting and removing approximately 85 acres of excess nuisance vegetation from the lagoon. An existing dike will be repaired and enlarged to permit the passage of maintenance equipment and to provide a means of regulating the water depth within the basin. Also, drainage channels will be cleaned and restored.

The project is a step toward the long range development of a regional park for the entire lagoon which is located 20 miles north of the City of San Diego. The proposed plan is designed to enhance the existing wildlife and water resources while reducing health hazards associated with mosquito population.

III. Environmental Setting

The general area in which the proposed project would be located is agriculturally surrounded by some urban and residential development. Most of the agricultural activity within the basin consists of crops requiring infrequent watering.

The overall character of the water within the basin is fresh to brackish, due to fresh water inflow and evaporation. Water quality varies from highly saline to fresh depending on runoff and evaporation.

Interstate 5, which passes through the middle of the lagoon, is the only road providing public access to the area.

The lagoon area is comprised of 500 acres of marsh land, which is an extraordinarily scenic, fishery, wildlife and recreation waterway. However, the lagoon has been altered by filling activity, construction of embankments, dikes, upstream dams, and discharge of sewage effluent. The existing sewage treatment plant discharges primary effluent into the ocean. A study is currently underway to determine the feasibility of discharging secondarily treated effluent.

The ecological diversity brought about by these alterations has provided a habitat for both fresh and salt water plant and animal communities. Two independent birds, the balding and the California Least Tern, nest in suitable habitats around the lagoon. A variety of amphibians and reptiles also frequent the area. Marine fauna and fish life is very limited and often temporary in the lagoon due to the extreme changes in salinity and oxygen levels. In recent years the lagoon outlet to the sea has

blocked by a sand berm and the basin has become choked with vegetation so there is essentially no draining or flushing movement. This situation has increased a wide spread mosquito breeding threat and control efforts are hampered by the dense vegetation.

There are several archaeological sites in the area and efforts have been made in the proposed project design to prevent the sites from being adversely affected.

IV. Environmental Impacts of the Project

Primary beneficial impacts of the proposed project will be: preservation of geological and archaeological resources; creation of a lagoon park that will provide a unique resource based recreation area; reduction of the mosquito population in the area, and, the enabling of waters to pass freely over the dike and out into the ocean maintaining a somewhat constant water level.

Potential short-term adverse impacts of the project include: excavation of the basin; creation of slopes; construction of the dike and removal of the majority of cattail-associated vegetation which will result in local wildlife seeking refuge elsewhere.

Additional potential adverse impacts of the project will be the increase in land value in the area and increasing interest in development of peripheral lands. Siltation will be increased from local surrounding development. Also, an increase in development could result in the intrusion of dogs and cats, poaching and vandalism.

V. Mitigation Measures

Construction will be scheduled to minimize interference with the wildlife habitat in the area. Public use of the proposed park will be supervised and during the breeding season, public visitation will be discouraged. Nesting sites will be cleared of vegetation and posted on fences prior to the nesting season. Many existing plant species will be encouraged to recolonize in the East Basin. Grading will be limited to dry periods and will be designed to minimize excess siltation of the lagoon.

VI. Alternatives to the Project

- No action
- Removal of vegetation by hand labor or mechanical means
- Drainage channels created by blasting or mechanically digging
- Creation of sumps or portholes
- Herbicide treatment of vegetation and controlled burning

The alternatives were not selected because they would detract from the main goal of utilizing the lagoon as an ecological preserve.

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VII. Short-term v. Long-term Impacts

The implementation of the proposed project will destroy approximately 85 acres of vegetation in the East Basin which will result in an immediate impact on the lagoon's wildlife due primarily to habitat destruction. The degree of severity of this impact will be less during the dry summer and early fall months.

The long-term impact would be the creation of an ecological preserve with minimal human disturbance.

VIII. Irreversible Environmental Impact

There will be no irreversible environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

IX. Growth-inducing Impacts

It is likely the presence of a wildlife preserve will precipitate additional residential development in adjacent areas. This will necessitate expansion of existing public services and facilities commercial establishments, and other types of urban expansion. It could result in the intrusion by dogs, cats, poaches and vandals.

The proposed project could cause land values to increase. The desirability of living near a wildlife refuge, park and open space will cause more people to seek homes in the area. As the demand for homes in the area increases, so will property values and their taxes.

NOTE: Subsequent to proper circulation and approval of the EIR for this project, an addendum to the document was prepared, circulated, and approved by the County of San Diego. The addendum revised methods of vegetation removal to include herbicide treatment and burning. A Notice of Determination, which includes this revision, was filed with the Secretary for Resources.