



Re: Council File No. [16-0600](#) (2016-17 Proposed Budget)

Honorable Councilmembers Krekorian, Blumenfield, Bonin, Englander and Koretz:

Less than one month ago, the PLUM Committee unanimously passed our Wildlife Corridor Motion described in Council File No. 14-0518 and subsequently you all passed this in full Council. [The Los Angeles Times editorial board](#) and [LA City Watch](#) have endorsed this motion, as well as a variety of [other media outlets](#) that reported and are keeping an eye on the outcome that we shared with our supporters. Many scientists and environmental organizations support this motion and the hiring of this critical position.

Now as the budget is in front of you please keep in mind that the Wildlife Corridor Habitat Linkage Zone is not a cost to the City and will pay dividends toward a healthy wildlife and ecosystem for Angelinos as a whole. For many years Los Angeles Planning Department had a residential environmental review that was weeded out with economic hardships for the city. This Friday when you consider budgets, please reconsider and enhance environmental review. Please allow for a qualified biologist or wildlife scientist in Planning who can make professional determinations about the effect of a building project on the surrounding environment. For too long Los Angeles policies have passed without consideration to the larger environment but we are out of time.

Please find the funds for a full-time position in Planning to specifically focus on wildlife corridor, ridgeline ordinances and any other open space wildlife habitat compliance issues. Inclusion of this position will help to realize the intention of your vote last month.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Bittner", written over a horizontal line.

Dave Bittner, Wildlife Research Institute Director and Biologist



Richard Williams <richard.williams@lacity.org>

Fwd: Appropriation for Trap-Neuter-Return Program EIR – Oppose

Travis Longcore <longcore@urbanwildlands.org>
To: richard.williams@lacity.org

Thu, May 12, 2016 at 11:03 PM

Dear Mr. Williams,

Please add this email to the file for CF 16-0600.

Thank you,
Travis Longcore

Begin forwarded message:

From: Travis Longcore <longcore@urbanwildlands.org>
Subject: Appropriation for Trap-Neuter-Return Program EIR – Oppose
Date: May 12, 2016 at 11:01:51 PM PDT
To: councilmember.krekorian@lacity.org, Mike Bonin <mike.bonin@lacity.org>, paul.koretz@lacity.org, Councilmember.Englander@lacity.org, councilmember.blumenfield@lacity.org
Cc: Barbara Romero <barbara.romero@lacity.org>

Paul Krekorian, Chair
Budget and Finance Committee
City of Los Angeles

Honorable Councilmember and Committee Members:

This email follows up on my testimony before your committee on May 3 regarding the total of \$800,000 that is proposed for use by the Department of Animal Services to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on a Trap-Neuter-Return feral cat program that is designed to allow the City to ask for the injunction issued in *The Urban Wildlands Group et al. v. City of Los Angeles* to be lifted. We remain deeply concerned that the City Council has been given misinformation about what the injunction does and does not require, and what program elements the General Manager intends to include in the program to be reviewed.

We therefore oppose allocation of these funds and urge you to decline to fund this EIR on both procedural and substantive grounds.

1. The elements of the Trap-Neuter-Return feral cat program that would be reviewed have not been considered by the executive authority of the Department of Animal Services, which is, under the City Charter, the Board of Animal Services Commissioners. Nor has the City Council been made aware of the contents of this program. This deficiency also plagues the Mitigated Negative Declaration that was prepared in late 2013 for the previously proposed "Citywide Cat Program."
2. The City Council appears to be unaware of the elements of the Citywide Cat Program as was proposed in 2013 and has inappropriately fixated on the spay/neuter aspect of the constellation of substantive changes to the regulatory framework for all cats (feral/stray/owned) that would be included in the program reviewed under the EIR. It is certain, based on statements made by General Manager Barnette at public meetings, that the intent of the program is to allow the Department to stop issuing permits to trap stray and feral cats in the City of Los Angeles and to refuse to accept feral cats at shelters.

Earlier this week at the Board of Animal Services Commissioners meeting, GM Barnette argued that the EIR was needed to lift the injunction so that the Department would no longer have to spend so much money on feral cats. It seems that she may have been including the cost of holding feral cats at the shelter as a program cost she would like to reduce. The only interpretation of her statement that makes sense is that she does not want feral and stray cats to be brought into the shelter system at all.

On February 25, 2014, GM Barnette said to the Board:

The terms of this injunction *require* us to, um, give trapping permits for cats and to accept those cats into the shelter. So that's one of the other good reasons to try to get past this and to try to get, um, on to a day when we're not under this injunction.

On December 9, 2014, GM Barnette again referred to accepting feral cats as a problematic condition of the injunction:

So here's what's going on. The CEQA report, the person who said that the the CEQA report and public comment ended about a year ago was telling the truth. Um, the uh, the injunction has been against the City for about five and a half or six years I believe at this point. It is very tedious. And, um, the City Attorney's office is looking at, um, and some private citizens who are willing to help fund some expert opinion to move things to the next level. Um, it's, all I can say is it's very tedious.

The department does not go out and round up feral cats. We don't do catch and kill. People, the injunction requires us to give people trapping permits, that if they have what they consider nuisance cats on private property they can get a permit from the Department, posted on their own property, and trap on their own property and then turn those cats in to us, um, and that's, that's a requirement of the injunction.

The nexus between the injunction and a desire by GM Barnette to stop providing residents, institutions, and businesses with an avenue by which stray and feral cats can be caught and turned into City shelters is undeniable. It is not clear that your Committee is fully aware that removal of this option for management is what it would be endorsing by appropriating the funds to prepare the EIR.

3. Many years ago, TNR was promoted as a means to “reduce and eliminate” feral cat populations. That outcome has been shown to be impossible in real-world situations and is rarely even mentioned any longer as a rationale for the practice. This fact is true because sterilization at the scale undertaken in even the most aggressive TNR programs in the country does not reach anywhere near the threshold necessary to affect reproductive levels. This seems to be counterintuitive for people to understand. An analogy is the percentage of a population required to be vaccinated to keep disease from spreading, which is approximately 70%. Similarly, 70–90% of the stray/feral cats would need to be sterilized to reduce the reproductive rate as a whole. This is an established scientific fact. No TNR program at the municipal scale has ever even reached more than 5% sterilization. Spending public funds on sterilization of feral cats is therefore a complete waste of money from the perspective of reducing the number of stray and feral cats. A far better strategy is to offer free or low-cost spay/neuter for all companion animals and thereby address the problem at its source.

We therefore encourage the Budget and Finance Committee to withhold approval of the funding requested for an EIR until action on the proposed program has been taken by the Board of Animal Services Commissioners to define the preferred project, and, preferably, until the City Council has had an opportunity to review and have meaningful input on said proposal.

Sincerely,
Travis Longcore

—

Travis Longcore, Ph.D.
Science Director

The Urban Wildlands Group
longcore@urbanwildlands.org



Richard Williams <richard.williams@lacity.org>

Council File No. 16-0600 (2016-17 Proposed Budget) Wildlife biologist personnel budget request in LA Department of Planning

Randi Feilich <rfeilich@projectcoyote.org>

Thu, May 12, 2016 at 11:22 AM

To: Councilmember.Englander@lacity.org, Mike.Bonin@lacity.org, Councilmember.Blumenfield@lacity.org, Councilmember.Krekorian@lacity.org, Paul.Koretz@lacity.org

Cc: richard.williams@lacity.org, Nicole.Bemson@lacity.org, laura.mclennan@lacity.org, david.grahamcaso@lacity.org, John.Popoch@lacity.org, Matt.Hale@lacity.org, Andy.Shrader@lacity.org, David.Hersch@lacity.org, vince.bertoni@lacity.org, Camilla Fox <cfox@projectcoyote.org>



PROMOTING COEXISTENCE
BETWEEN PEOPLE & WILDLIFE THROUGH
EDUCATION, SCIENCE & ADVOCACY

To:

[Councilmember Mitch Englander](mailto:Councilmember.Mitch.Englander@lacity.org), Mike.Bonin@lacity.org
Councilmember.Blumenfield@lacity.org
Councilmember.Krekorian@lacity.org
Paul.Koretz@lacity.org

CC: richard.williams@lacity.org
Nicole.Bemson@lacity.org
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As the budget is now in front of you please keep in mind that the Wildlife Corridor Habitat Linkage Zone is not a cost to the City and will pay dividends toward a healthy wildlife and ecosystem for Los Angeles residents as a whole. For many years Los Angeles Planning Department had a residential environmental review that was weeded out with economic hardships for the city. This Friday when you consider budgets, please reconsider and enhance environmental review. Please allow for a qualified biologist or wildlife scientist in Planning who can make professional determinations about the effect of a building project on the surrounding environment. For too long Los Angeles policies have passed without consideration to the larger environment but we are out of time. Please find the funds for a full-time position in Planning to specifically focus on wildlife corridor, ridgeline ordinances and any other open space wildlife habitat compliance issues. Inclusion of this position will help to realize the intention of your vote last month. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

RANDI FEILICH,
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REPRESENTATIVE

PROJECT COYOTE | www.ProjectCoyote.org

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FACEBOOK: [ProjectCoyote](https://www.facebook.com/ProjectCoyote) | TWITTER: [@ProjectCoyote](https://twitter.com/ProjectCoyote)



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