

*California Native Plant Society*  
Los Angeles/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter  
15811 Leadwell St.  
Van Nuys, CA 91406  
May 16, 2008

Ronald J. Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning  
Department of Transportation, District 7  
100 S. Main Street, MS-16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Subject: I405/101 Connector

Mr. Kosinski:

On behalf of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS), Los Angeles/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter, I am writing to provide you with input concerning proposed plans for the I405/101 connector. In short, we are against disturbing the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve i.e., we are in favor of either a No-Build Alternative or Alternative 1 and against Alternatives 2 & 3 as outlined in the Draft EA/IS that is currently under consideration. If we have to start diminishing the pathetically few wildlife areas that we have in order to accommodate more growth, then we're going in the wrong direction. Instead of buying into the concept of unlimited traffic growth, CALTRANS should be planning for a future that is geared to mass transit. We should look to planning that lessens our freeway carbon footprint not one that promotes an increased traffic glut and air pollution.

The Wildlife Reserve is one of the few remaining wild wetlands in the San Fernando Valley which was historically covered with ecologically rich marshes, ponds, streams and a river. The eastern portion of the Wildlife Reserve is open habitat with scattered *Baccharis* sp. especially conducive for birds of prey, and is a nesting area for a variety of bird species. This is also the main Canada goose foraging area in the Wildlife Reserve. This same area is currently one of the least disturbed (by humans) in the Wildlife Reserve. The portion along Burbank Blvd. has many mature oak and walnut trees, many of which were planted using funds given to the Consortium that were penalties (mitigation) for chemical spills in the Basin.

The addition of freeway on- and off-ramps in the eastern portion of the Wildlife Reserve would fragment the habitat, most likely ruining it for raptor or Canada goose foraging, create dead zones under the overpasses, and probably lead to a huge increase in homeless people due to the overpasses. The sense of "wild nature" that is available will be seriously reduced, and that sense of getting out in nature that is such a key component of the children's education program would be impacted.

The disturbance to the soil due to actual construction, rights-of-way and buffer zones, and access to the construction zone would likely set back weed control efforts to square one, obliterating nearly 20 years of effort and significant investments by CNPS, the Wildlife Reserve Consortium, the City of Los Angeles and the Army Corps of Engineers.

CNPS is a non-profit organization of over 10,000 laypersons and professional botanists with 32 statewide chapters. Our mission is to increase the understanding and appreciation of California's native plants and to conserve them and their natural habitats through education, science, advocacy, horticulture and stewardship. We urge you to not damage one of our few wild spaces in our urban environment.

Sincerely

Snowdy Dodson,  
Chapter President