



**REGULAR MEETING
GOLDEN RAIN FOUNDATION LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE***

Wednesday, September 8, 2021 – 1:30 p.m.

VIRTUAL MEETING

**Laguna Woods Village
24351 El Toro Road, Laguna Woods, CA**

Laguna Woods Village owners/residents are welcome to participate in all open committee meetings and submit comments or questions for virtual meetings using one of two options

1. Join the Zoom meeting at <https://zoom.us/j/99225095454>. Please “Raise Your Hand” during the agenda item you would like to speak to. If you have an item that is NOT on the agenda, please “Raise Your Hand” during the Member Comments agenda item.

2 Via email to meeting@vmsinc.org any time before the meeting is scheduled to begin or during the meeting. Please use the name GRF Landscape Committee in the subject line of the email. Name and unit number must be included.

NOTICE AND AGENDA

This Meeting May Be Recorded

1. Call to Order
2. Acknowledgment of Media
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Approval of Meeting Report for June 9, 2021
5. Chair Remarks
6. Department Head Update

Consent:

None

Reports

7. Update on the Creek
 - a. Presentation by Vector Control

Items for Discussion and Consideration

8. Member Comments (Items Not on the Agenda)
9. Response to Member Comments

Concluding Business:

10. Committee Member Comments

11. Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday, December 8, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.

12. Adjournment

Yvonne Horton, Chair
Kurt Wiemann, Staff Officer
Eve Morton, Landscape Coordinator
Telephone: 949-268-2565

*A quorum of the GRF Board or more may also be present at the meeting.



OPEN MEETING

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE GOLDEN RAIN FOUNDATION
LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, June 9, 2021 – 1:30 P.M.
VIRTUAL MEETING
Laguna Woods Village Community Center
24351 El Toro Road**

REPORT

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair - Yvonne Horton, Maggie Blackwell, Lynn Jarrett, Reza Karimi, Manuel Armendariz

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Andre Torng

OTHERS PRESENT:

ADVISORS PRESENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Kurt Wiemann, Eve Morton

1. Call to Order

Chair Horton called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

2. Acknowledgement of Media

No press was present.

3. Approval of the Agenda

Director Armendariz made a motion to approve the agenda. The committee was in unanimous support.

4. Approval of Meeting Report of March 10, 2021

Director Jarrett made a motion to approve the Meeting Report. The committee was in unanimous support.

5. Committee Chair Remarks

Chair Horton stated that the annuals at the gates look really nice. The sales in the Village are up 14% so that is good news.

6. Department Head Update

Mr. Wiemann shared some slides regarding recent updates to landscape on GRF property.

Mr. Wiemann thanked the committee for their compliments regarding the landscaping at the gates.

Mr. Wiemann presented a PowerPoint to the committee to show them some GRF improvements including new irrigation systems at the Village nursery. There are 87 varieties of plants in the nursery. Most everything used in the Village is grown in our Nursery. Four staff members work there full-time. A new shade structure and electricity were put in at the Nursery. Some new mowers were purchased. Also, all new edgers were purchased since the existing were very old.

He spoke to committee about that the mower shop needs new lifts. He will bring costs for the new lifts to the next meeting.

Consent:

None.

Reports

7. Update on the Creek

Mr. Wiemann reported that we have finally passed all the mitigation requirements at the creek. Now, moving forward, we don't have to pay a biologist when working in the mitigation area.

Maintaining the creek means leaving native plants alone while maintaining areas we are allowed to maintain.

We will be removing any non-native wildlife, along with a biologist.

We are not allowed to alter the streambed so cannot touch stagnant water. He will ask California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) about altering the streambed.

Director Armendariz receives many emails from residents about the bridge at the creek.

He said some cattails are as tall as the trees. Why should installing that bridge cause all these new rules about what can be done at creek? Residents ask why is it that we can only do some of the work if we purchase credits.

Mr. Wiemann responded that the creek area was always under the jurisdiction of all these agencies but when we applied to build the bridge, it alerted all those agencies to our creek.

We cannot "remove" cattails, only trim them. That is part of not disturbing the bottom of the streambed. Biologist did go in a week before trimming and told us what areas had wildlife in them so they couldn't be touched.

In August, we can clear out more cattails because nesting season will be over.

Director Armanedariz suggested posting a statement to Members who live in that area about what we can and cannot do at the creek and why. Mr. Wiemann said there was a full-page article in the "Breeze" about the Creek. Director Armendariz said it should be run again with information regarding the credits.

Director Armanedariz asked if you bought credits, could you remove cattails? Mr. Wiemann said we were looking at purchasing credits just for the 1/3 acre of the mitigation area and the cost was in the millions of dollars just for that area. Buying credits for the entire creek would not be feasible.

Director Blackwell stated that any information about the creek should be available on the website.

Items for Discussion and Consideration

8. Member Comments (Items Not on the Agenda)

Several Member made comments which were answered by the committee.

9. Response to Member Comments

None.

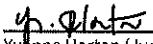
Concluding Business:

10. Committee Member Comments

None.

11. Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday, September 8 at 1:30 p.m.

12. Adjournment at 2:23 p.m.



Yvonne Horton (Jun 21, 2021 10:16 PDT)

Yvonne Horton, Chair



STAFF REPORT

DATE: September 8, 2021

FOR: Landscape Committee

SUBJECT: Aliso Creek Update

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and File

BACKGROUND:

In 2014, The Golden Rain Foundation of Laguna Woods (GRF) entered into a Streambed Alteration Agreement (Agreement) with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) due to the construction of the pedestrian bridge located in Aliso Park. The creek area is considered a natural riparian habitat and is subject to the regulations put forth by several government agencies, with CDFW being the lead agency. The agreement requires annual biological monitoring of the area directly downstream of the bridge.

The agreement stipulates that the monitoring shall continue for a minimum of five years and shall continue until GRF meets success criteria set forth in the agreement. This year is the seventh year of the monitoring. Once the criteria are met, the biologist monitoring is no longer required; the prescribed maintenance shall continue in perpetuity.

On March 10, 2021, the GRF Landscape Committee approved an unbudgeted operating expense of \$13,534 to perform additional cattail clearing within the creek.

DISCUSSION:

Each year, the Landscape Department has several main objectives in Aliso Creek; control weeds, both native and non-native, successfully meet the requirements of the mitigation area, and complete the annual survey of the mitigation area.

Guidelines are set by the regulating agencies governing as to when and how maintenance activities can take place within the limits of the entire creek bed. Staff can remove litter and invasive weeds, by hand, from the banks and adjacent areas year-round. Work within the creek bed, such as removing native growth such as cattails, can normally only occur outside of the typical native bird nesting season which occurs annually between February 1 and August 31.

Working with wildlife biologists, staff can now remove the cattails on two other occasions during the year. Prior to starting the additional work period, a biologist must first perform a thorough survey of the area, checking for nesting birds and other wildlife. If any wildlife or nests are observed, buffer zones are created in which no work can be performed. Staff

can then proceed, under the guidance of biologists, to ensure there is no disturbance of the wildlife.

The annual maintenance within the streambed consists of staff trimming cattails from the creek bed and trimming the branches on the lower third of the native trees along the bank. The cattails cannot be removed completely; cattail trimming is limited to cutting by hand without disturbing the stream bed and can only be cut one foot above the waterline. The use of herbicides and plant growth regulators is also prohibited on native plant material.

On August 19 & 20, 2021, biologists surveyed the entire creek for turtles and nesting wildlife. No active bird nests were located and one Southwestern Pond turtle was located; the required 500-foot buffer zone was put into place. Beginning on August 23, 2021, under the watchful eye of the biologists, crews entered the creek and spent ten days clearing cattails and other non-native plants from the creek bed (Attachment 1).

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS:

On March 10, 2021, the GRF Landscape Committee approved an unbudgeted operating expense of \$13,534 to perform additional cattail clearing within the creek.

Prepared By: Kurt Wiemann, Director of Landscape Services

Reviewed By: Eve Morton, Landscape Coordinator

ATTACHMENT(S)

Attachment 1: Photos of Cattail Trimming

ATTACHMENT 1







