



REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

DATE: NOVEMBER 12, 2014

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: GREG RAMIREZ, CITY MANAGER 

BY: LOUIS CELAYA, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: ADOPT RESOLUTION 14-1768; RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AGOURA HILLS IN SUPPORT FOR THE BUILDING OF A WILDLIFE CORRIDOR ON THE 101 FREEWAY

The City of Agoura Hills lies within the Santa Monica Mountains, an important regional and coastal habitat whose natural beauty is an important part of the character of Agoura Hills and its way of life. Maintaining and protecting the ecosystem of the Santa Monica Mountains is critical to maintaining and protecting the economic and social values of Malibu's residents.

Over the years, the Santa Monica Mountains area has suffered habitat degradation and species loss due to isolation from other natural habitat areas as the result of human development. In particular, the habitats have become totally isolated by the US 101 and Interstate 405 (1-405) freeways.

Reports have shown that the region's wildlife is suffering from that isolation and the ecosystem of the Santa Monica Mountains is threatened with long term degradation if the isolation persists. The apex predator of the Santa Monica Mountains, the mountain lion, has shown signs of increased conflict and genetic defects as a result of its inability to disperse. Because local urban parklands are bordered by major freeways, it is nearly impossible for mountain lions and other wildlife to cross safely into new territories. Without free movement, the wildlife is threatened with loss of genetic diversity and territorial disputes, much of which is caused by the dangers of crossing multilane freeways.

A growing group of advocates, including the National Park Service, Caltrans, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains, National Wildlife Foundation, Santa Monica Mountains Fund, the City of Calabasas, the City of Malibu and others, have joined together on a project to build a wildlife corridor across US 101 at Liberty Canyon in order to link protected habitats on either side of the freeway. The passage will provide mountain lions and other wildlife safe passage to find food and mates, and will improve the genetic diversity of both the flora and fauna of the Santa Monica Mountains ecosystem.

In the past, the City Council has expressed its support for grant funding efforts to support the construction of a wildlife corridor. The Environmental Responsibility Community, at a recent meeting, discussed this concept and supports a resolution for building a wildlife corridor on US 101 at Liberty Canyon to protect the ongoing health of the Santa Monica Mountains ecosystem, and preserve this natural heritage for Agoura Hills's residents today and in the future. The cities of Calabasas and Malibu have recently passed resolutions in support of building a wildlife corridor on the US 101 freeway.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff respectfully recommends Approval of Resolution No. 14-1768; Resolution of the City Council of the City of Agoura Hills Approving the Application in Support for Building a Wildlife Corridor in the US 101 Freeway

Attachment: Resolution No. 14-1768

RESOLUTION NO. 14-1768

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AGOURA HILLS, CALIFORNIA, IN SUPPORT FOR THE BUILDING OF A WILDLIFE CORRIDOR ON THE 101 FREEWAY

WHEREAS, the City of Agoura Hills lies within the Santa Monica Mountains, an important habitat whose natural beauty is an important part of the character of Agoura Hills and its way of life. Maintaining and protecting the ecosystem of the Santa Monica Mountains is critical to maintaining and protecting the economic and social values of Agoura Hills residents; and

WHEREAS, over the years, the Santa Monica Mountains area has suffered habitat degradation and species loss due to isolation from other natural habitat areas as the result of human development. In particular, the habitats have become totally isolated by the US 101 and I-405 Freeways; and

WHEREAS, the region's wildlife is suffering from the isolation and the ecosystem of the Santa Monica Mountains is threatened with long term degradation if the isolation persists. The apex predator of the Santa Monica Mountains, the mountain lion, has shown signs of increased conflict and genetic defects as a result of its inability to disperse. Because local urban parklands are bordered by major freeways, its nearly impossible for mountain lions and other wildlife to cross safely into new territories. Without free movement, the wildlife is threatened with the loss of genetic diversity and territorial disputes, much of which is caused by the dangers of crossing multilane freeways; and

WHEREAS, a growing group of advocates, including the National Park Service, Caltrans, Santa Monica Mountain Conservancy, Mountain Recreation and Conservancy Authority, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains, National Wildlife Foundation, Western Alliance for Nature, Santa Monica Mountains Fund, the City of Calabasas, the City of Malibu, and others, have joined together on a project to build a wildlife corridor across the US 101 at Liberty Canyon in order to link protected habitats on either side of the freeway. The passage will provide mountain lions and other wildlife safe passage to find more food and mates, and will improve the genetic diversity of both flora and fauna of the Santa Monica Mountain ecosystem.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AGOURA HILLS HEREBY supports a wildlife corridor on the US 101 at Liberty Canyon in Agoura Hills to protect the ongoing health of Santa Monica Mountains ecosystem and preserve this natural heritage for Agoura Hills residents today and in the future.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Agoura Hills this 12th day of November, 2014, by the following vote to wit:

AYES: (
NOES: (
ABSENT: (
ABSTAIN: (
)

William D. Koehler,
Mayor

ATTEST:

Kimberly M. Rodrigues, MMC
City Clerk