



# FOCL POINTS

Friends of Colorado Lagoon is a coalition of concerned citizens working to preserve and restore Colorado Lagoon

Friends of Colorado Lagoon Newsletter No. 13

November 2010

## The 1000 ft Underground Culvert was Successfully Cleaned for the First Time since Installation in the 50's



Photos by Dave Pirazzi and Todd King

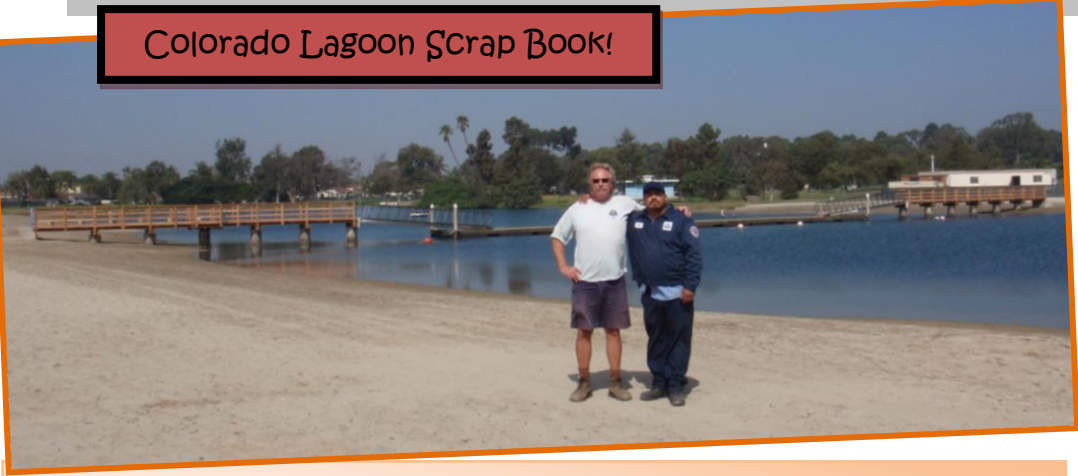
The Colorado Lagoon received lots of attention this past summer. Here's a quick breakdown: the County's Termino Avenue Drain Project worked its way up Appian Way, front loaders cleaned out the underground culvert, contractors upgraded 3 major drains, the footbridge was under construction, Phase 2 restoration concepts went through several municipal approvals, FOCL hosted an impressive Acoustic Tidal Artwalk, and FOCL Innovators monitored the wetlands habitat during all of the activity. It has been quite eventful and Friends of Colorado Lagoon has been working to ensure a successful restoration and a smooth transition. But as seasons have turned from summer to autumn, the tide has also turned for Colorado Lagoon. With restoration comes a change to the landscape. If you visit the Colorado Lagoon now, you'll notice some of these changes. First, the County has exited Appian Way and the parking lot near the Lagoon is newly paved and improved, allowing FOCL to re-open the Wetlands And Marine Science Education Center (WAMSEC). Second, the mighty footbridge traversing the Lagoon's water is complete and safe to walk across. As you can see in the photos above, some of these changes are not visible, including the 3 large underground vaults that were installed to hold the new trash separation devices and low-flow diversion system, as well as the increased tidal flushing resulting from the removal of 3-foot thick sedimentation from the underground culvert. As the first portion of the restoration is concluding, the next part, which includes the dredging of toxic sediments, is being organized by the City of Long Beach.

FOCL is excited to get back to its usual public education programs at the WAMSEC and we want to celebrate these achievements in restoration and awareness with you! **On Saturday November 13th from 10am-2pm** FOCL will be hosting the **Wetlands and Marine Science Education Center's Grand Re-Opening** celebrating the first part of the project's completion and full use of the Science Center! We would love to see you at this wonderful event and we encourage everyone to invite their neighbors and family to re-introduce the WAMSEC to the community and learn more about this tremendous restoration project.

But that's not all... there is yet another critical event on the FOCL calendar that is a perfect example of the changing times. The Colorado Lagoon Restoration Project is going before **Long Beach City Council on Tuesday November 16th**. The council will be voting on two things: an addendum to the environmental impact report because more of the Lagoon needs to be restored and the approval of the **Phase 2 tidal creek that will reconnect the Lagoon to Alamitos Bay**. We need supporters at the meeting, telling the council how important a clean and useable Colorado Lagoon is to local citizens. Before that meeting we need our Friends (you!) to spread the word and tell your neighbors and the council how important the overall project is and how important it is to finish this restoration correctly.

There will be more information to follow, but if you have any questions about these or any of our events, please contact us at [Friends@coloradolagoon.org](mailto:Friends@coloradolagoon.org). Thank you for all of your support.

### Colorado Lagoon Scrap Book!



Mike Grauten and Rudy Lozano, City of Long Beach employees, stand in front of the bridge they expertly built after the old one was demolished because of its degraded state. Carpenter Mike Grauten says: "This new bridge should hold up to the wear and tear for another 50 or 60 years." FOCL is quite appreciative of all the hard work Mike, Rudy and the rest of the City employees put into the creating the bridge.

### Wetlands And Marine Science Education Center Grand Re-Opening!!!!



**November 13<sup>th</sup>  
10am-2pm!!**

10-11am open house; 11-11:30am ceremony; 11:30-2pm median planting

Come join the Friends of Colorado and celebrate the opening of the WAMSEC after months of closure due to Lagoon restoration. The City of Long Beach will also recognize all those who have helped finish Part 1 of the Restoration!!

The FOCL team explored the Lagoon with over 500 Junior Lifeguards this summer. Here Eric Zahn is sharing a Sea Hare he found near the seashore. The rest of the team: Taylor Parker, Pete Stearns and Whitney Graves (not shown).



### FOCL Naturalists, Cris Sarabia & Adrienne Bosler, exploring Morro Bay!



FOCL goes underground! From right: Education Director Taylor Parker, President Dave Pirazzi and Restoration Director Eric Zahn stand in the giant water storage container below ground near 6<sup>th</sup> st and Park Ave. The container collects storm-water flows before they go into the Lagoon and then redirects that water to be treated.

## We need YOU at the City Council Meeting Tuesday November 16<sup>th</sup> at 6pm

to support the  
**Colorado Lagoon Restoration!!!**

The Lagoon Restoration is facing Council vote in two cases. First, the scope of the restoration has grown and an addendum to the environmental impact report needs to be approved. Second, the Phase 2 tidal creek that all of the city commissions approved along with overwhelming public support is up for vote as well. **We need our Friends to show up and speak for the Lagoon!** Make sure you wear your FOCL shirt and grab a sticker before entering city hall.

If you have questions, please contact:  
Friends@coloradolagoon.org

## Litter Free Beach Days

by Eric Zahn, Restoration Director

Us southern Californian's always enjoy a day at the beach. Whether building sand castles, swimming, barbecuing or just soaking in the sun, the beach is a dynamic place to hang out. Historically the shores of Colorado Lagoon have been a venue for such summertime activities. It sometimes seems that anyone who grew up in Long Beach between the 1930's and 1970's learned to swim in the Lagoon. In fact, a report from the 1970's actually documented over 2000 people using the Lagoon's beaches on a daily basis during summertime. Today, families still flock to the Lagoon on hot summer days. Many of these families have been coming each year for generations to enjoy a day at the beach.

A couple years ago FOCL spearheaded an effort to better accommodate Lagoon beachgoers and offer more balance between human use of the Lagoon and its sensitive environmental conditions. For Coastal Clean-up Day 2008 FOCL volunteers planted 180 native plants along the sidewalk between the park and the south beach. However, these plants were planted for a higher calling than just habitat and drought tolerance, they were planted to trap trash. With the high use of the Lagoon, it is inevitable that trash ends up blowing from recreational areas into the wetland, and this little beach garden has become an important method for managing that impact. To assist the plants, and add a unique aesthetic to the planting, several stretches of sand fencing were also installed along the park border as well.

While this landscaping does an excellent job of controlling litter, plenty still finds its way to the shoreline. For the past year-and-a-half over **2000 lbs of debris have been collected** by FOCL volunteers, at an average of **35 lbs per week**. Recently, the City of Long Beach installed trash separation devices on 3 of the Lagoon's major storm drains, which should dramatically reduce the amount of watershed born trash entering the Lagoon. With all of these best management practices being implemented we expect a noticeable reduction in the amount of trash FOCL volunteers collect each week. We are so confident that there will be less Lagoon trash to pick up from now on that we have changed the name for FOCL's Monday volunteer program from 'trash clean-ups' to '**Maintenance Monday.**' **Every Monday 9-11am** volunteers can still come out and to pick up trash, but a variety of other activities will be available like watering plants and maintaining trails that will keep the Lagoon looking beautiful and trash free for your next beach day.

## Native Trees

Photo and text by Adrienne Bosler, FOCL Board member & Education Committee Chair



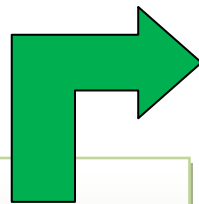
Torrey Pine (*Pinus torreyana*)

**Native trees** planted by volunteers in the spring of 2009 beautifully frame the East Bank restoration site. Though these trees are young today, they are rapidly growing into superior habitat for the many birds, reptiles and insects that call the lagoon home. Be sure to watch their foliage flourish in this environment and change with the seasons.

Be sure to participate in our many community-based events FOCL hosts monthly and maybe you too can plant a healthy Torrey Pine like this one!

## Colorado Lagoon Scrap Book (continued)...

Regular volunteers to our community-based restoration events, Jeff and Sue Moore, share bottles of their Colorado Lagoon Toxic Sludge homebrew with Taylor and Eric. Let's hope it tastes and smells better than Lagoon water.





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From right: Whitney Graves, Hayley Zemel, Tristan Stearns, Jessika De Jesus, Lindsey Noordman and Pete Stearns.

Friends of Colorado Lagoon's  
**Team of Innovators**

Made possible by generous financial contributions from FOCL members and United States Fish & Wildlife Service



FOCL Innovators are a special group of leaders conducting nature walks, research, environmental education, art projects and community-based restoration at the Colorado Lagoon. Above, our team is lifting the net in our monthly beach seine to document marine species. To the right, Naturalist Pete Stearns leads a group on a Water Quality nature walk.

