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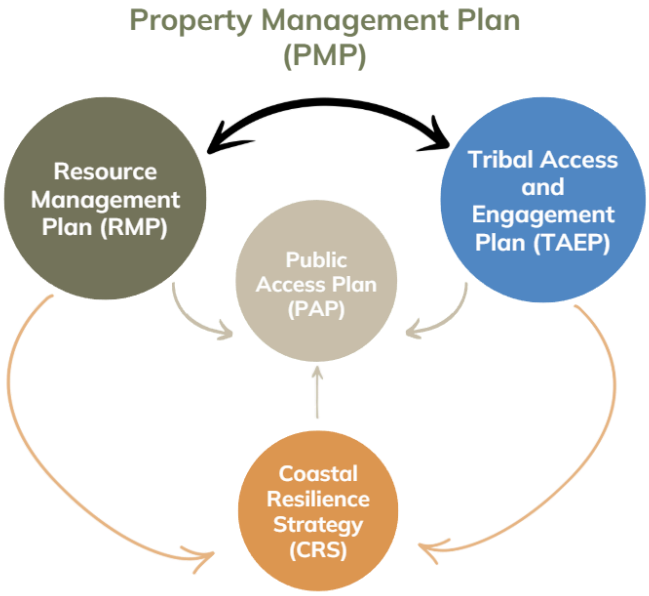
Plans Approved for Randall Preserve After Two-Year Public Process

With thousands of public comments and many adjustments, the Property Management Plan was adopted launching the next phase

NEWPORT BEACH, CA — On Wednesday, August 12, 2026, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) Governing Board adopted the Property Management Plan for the Randall Preserve/Genga. This planning was done in close partnership with the nonprofit Coastal Corridor Alliance (CCA). The Preserve is now one step closer to passive public access and restoring a landscape that has seen decades of extractive activities. A 27 member Randall Preserve Advisory Committee, established as part of the late Frank Randall's $50 million gift to acquire the property, reached consensus in mid-July and recommended the plans for formal adoption by MRCA. Note: In March of this year, the MRCA Board also approved a Tribal Access and Engagement Plan for the property and this plan was one of the first, if not the first, to be created in Orange County.

In 2022, CCA applied for and received a federal grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. That funding award was the catalyst moment for the creation of three property plans and officially

launched the multi-year planning effort. Additional funding came from the Wildlife Conservation Board, The Trust for Public Land, Orange County Community Foundation, the Warne Family Charitable Foundation, and other foundations and individuals. The first document, a Resource Management Plan, outlines the habitat and species stewardship. The second plan is a Public Access Plan that highlights the types of trails, their locations, and trailheads—along with public amenities—that will be available on site. The final plan is one that focuses on sea level rise and the inundation of the wetlands in the lower portion of the property, called a Coastal Resilience Strategy.



"Our team has been engaging the community to ensure the public desires are both understood and, were appropriately incorporated into the future plans," says Melanie Schlotterbeck, a consultant managing the Randall Preserve planning process for CCA. "The extensive community outreach, not only created unique opportunities for input, but will also include a report-out after the plans are adopted."

Ensuring the community who has been impacted by decades of oil operation had an opportunity to provide meaningful input was a priority of this planning process. The nearby community includes residents that are deemed to be economically disadvantaged by the State of California. Therefore, outreach opportunities were provided in both English and Spanish.

"Orange County is a new area for MRCA to have a property conserved, but we've been grateful for all of the new relationships established here from the elected officials, cities and county, fire agencies, public works, police agencies, and more," says Brian Baldauf, Deputy Executive Officer for MRCA. "Establishing partnerships is going to be critical to the success of the Randall Preserve, especially when it is finally open for public access."

While the remediation work and soil cleanup continues on the property into the foreseeable future, both CCA and MRCA are working together to get the public access components lined up for when MRCA takes operational control of the land and the phased public access begins in earnest.

The public can expect more than five miles of trails that meander through a variety of landscapes, giving exceptional views of Catalina Island, Mt. Baldy, the Palos Verdes Peninsula, and on a clear day the Los Padres National Forest. During the Randall Preserve Advisory Committee meetings, many comments were

received related to public access and potential impacts with the many unique species on the property. It was a point of great concern.

Because of this, additional funding was sought that supported the study of recreational impacts on plants and animals. This document led to additional stewardship decisions related to the protection of more than 45 rare, sensitive, threatened, and endangered species on the property.

“We’d like to thank all of the contributors to this process from the planning team to the consultants, including Dudek—especially Michael Sweesy, Kam Muri, Gaurav Srivastava and Aliah Werth—as well as Dr. John Baas, and of course those who served on the Advisory Committee,” states Brian Baldauf. “We would not be here, but for the countless hours and thoughtful discussions that led to the final version of the plans.”

All of the plans can be found at RandallPreserve.org/Plans, including versions in Spanish of the Public Access Plan and Recreation Impact Analysis. Digital maps are also available for the community to overlay different property features, constraints, and the trail system over the Preserve.

“CCA looks forward to the day that the property can be open and is presently fundraising for items that help advance the Property Management Plan, including a vision plan, habitat and species studies, as well as restoration plans,” comments Melanie Schlotterbeck. “In fact, we’ve just kicked off a Wetland Restoration Feasibility Study to understand what the possibilities are for creating new coastal wetlands in an area that has been diked for a very long time.”

Stay tuned for additional Randall Preserve news by subscribing via the website: RandallPreserve.org/Subscribe.

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About CCA:
Coastal Corridor Alliance is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, originally established to protect Banning Ranch, now the Randall Preserve. Our new mission is to protect biodiversity, foster community stewardship, and advocate for appropriate human access on the Randall Preserve and Santa Ana River Coastal Corridor. Learn more at: CoastalCorridor.org.

About MRCA:
The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority is dedicated to the preservation and management of local open space and parkland, wildlife habitat, coastal access, watershed lands, and trails in both wilderness and urban settings, and to ensuring access to public parkland and coastal resources. Learn more at: MRCA.ca.gov.