

# **Chronology: City Efforts to Pursue Federal, State and Local Funding Opportunities for West Coyote Hills Land Acquisition**

**June 2, 2003** – Fullerton City Councilman and Mayor Pro-Tem Mike Clesceri forms the 'Preserving Coyote Hills as a Nature Park "Think Tank" Forum. The Forum consisted of the following State, County and local officials, community and local business leaders and local organizations and the public:

- Shawn Nelson (City of Fullerton Council Member);
- Angela Lindstrom and Kathleen Shanfield (Friends of Coyote Hills);
- Gary Watts (CA State Parks);
- Minard Duncan (Fullerton School District);
- Enrique Arroyo and Belinda Faustinos (San Gabriel Rivers and Mountains Conservancy);
- Bruce Whittaker (Orange County Supervisor Chris Norby's aid);
- Melanie Schlotterback (Trust for Public Lands);
- Bonnie Slater (equestrian representative); and
- Doug Miles (concerned citizen)

The Forum's goal was to seek funds to acquire the West Coyote Hills property with the intent of keeping West Coyote Hills as park land and/or a wildlife conservancy. After much discussion, the conclusion made at the end of the meeting was clear: There were no available federal, state or county monies available for this project – either because the specific funding sources were either already allocated in full to other projects or because the cost of the project exceeded available funding limits. Additionally, San Gabriel Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the Trust for Public Lands indicated an interest to help in the project; however their organizations could only be involved in funding land acquisitions with a "willing seller". Chevron did not express a desire to be a willing seller at that time. The assumption that Chevron was not a willing seller came from the fact that Chevron never responded to any inquires about selling. However, the minutes of the meeting seem to indicate that SGMC made no official inquires directly to Chevron either. (See Attachment 1)

**October 30, 2003** – Fullerton News-Tribune publishes an article in which Fullerton Councilman and Mayor Pro-Tem Mike Celsceri reaffirms his position on the West Coyote Hills development project. In the article he also reconfirms the lack of available federal, state and county funds for the acquisition of the West Coyote Hills property. (See Attachment 2)

**May 10, 2006** – Fullerton City Mayor Leland Wilson sends letters to the Mayors of the cities adjacent to the West Coyote Hills property (Buena Park, La Habra and La Mirada), asking them to lend their support to Fullerton's effort to acquire state funds for the purchase of the West Coyote Hills property. It was Mayor Wilson's hope that a joint action from multiple cities in two counties would have greater weight and thus find greater success in acquiring funding from the state. No interest was expressed by any of the cities contacted. (See Attachment 3)

**Late Spring / Summer 2006** – City staff asks Townsend Public Affairs to gather information on potential funding sources to acquire property at West Coyote Hills. Two potential funding sources included the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and Proposition 84 funds (approved by the electorate in Fall 2006).

**Fall 2006** - City staff is asked by Council to identify strategies for State and/or Federal funds. As part of that strategy, staff identifies Chevron-owned properties (approximately 30 – 40 acres) adjacent to the Robert Ward Nature Preserve that could be acquired and used to expand the Nature Preserve. A meeting is held with Chevron to determine “willing seller” status for the 30-40 acres. Chevron agrees verbally they would be a “willing seller” of the properties identified.

**February 20, 2007** - Federal Funding Priorities for FY08 are presented to City Council for consideration and approval. Coyote Hills was included as part of the City’s FY08 Federal Appropriations booklet as a “special project”. It was presented as a “special project” The FY08 Federal Funding Priorities were approved 5-0 by the City Council. (See Attachment 4)

**March 13 - 14, 2007** – A delegation representing the City of Fullerton including Mayor Shawn Nelson, Councilmember Sharon Quirk, Assistant to the Fullerton City Manager Joe Felz and Bob Gaines of Smith, Dawson & Andrews travel to Washington D.C. to meet with representatives from Fullerton’s federally-elected officials to discuss the City’s FY08 Federal funding Priorities. While in Washington, the City’s delegation meets with the following individuals:

- Mr. Eric Swedlund, Deputy Director, Office of CA Governor Schwarzenegger
- Congressman Ed Royce and Legislative Assistant Darin Schrader
- Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez and Legislative Assistants Kate Riley and Ned Steiner
- Legislative staff from Senator Barbara Boxer’s Office.
- Legislative Assistant Ryan Hall from Senator Diane Feinstein’s Office.

**FY 07/08 – FY 08/09** - Staff continued to work with State consultants to identify potential funding sources for West Coyote Hills land acquisitions/park developments. (See Attachment 5)