



Irvine-Laguna Wildlife Corridor

Connecting Habitats
from Mountains to Coast

THIS NEWSLETTER'S FEATURED ARTICLES:

County Support - 1

Photos from the Field - 3

A Letter From Our President
Norm Grossman - 4

COUNTY SUPPORT

By Anthony Falcone

As 2025 draws to a close, it marks the end of a critical chapter in the Laguna Greenbelt's efforts to see the world's first and only urban wildlife corridor fully realized.

Over the past year, significant progress has been made in gaining the support of our partners in local government, non-profits, and even a local union representing 32,000 members. Most recently, the Orange County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted in support of joining our Partner Charter.

Vice Chair Katrina Foley played a pivotal role in advancing this effort by requesting the Partner Charter be added to the Board of Supervisors' meeting agenda for consideration. Throughout the year, Vice Chair Foley and her staff dedicated time and attention to understanding the purpose and long-term implications of the Partner Charter. The supportive vote came after Vice Chair Foley met with us for a briefing on the Laguna Greenbelt and Irvine-Laguna Wildlife Corridor (ILWC) in late October. In the meeting, we discussed some of the key challenges facing the ILWC and broadly shared what steps must be taken to address these challenges.

Continued on Page 2 →



Lake Forest Drive Undercrossing
in Irvine, CA



COUNTY SUPPORT

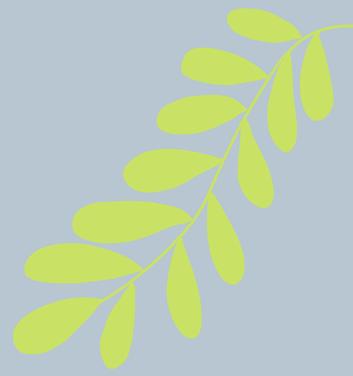
Vice Chair Foley's staff has continuously engaged with the team, taking the time to meet with us on multiple occasions to understand the importance of the ILWC and the challenges we face. The unanimous support from the Orange County Board of Supervisors is a milestone that establishes a durable foundation for future collaboration between the Laguna Greenbelt, Inc. and highlights the County's recognition of the importance of the ILWC.

With Orange County being the latest signatory of the Partner Charter, they join UNITE HERE Local 11, Save Orange Hills, and Naturalist for You, to have signed on in 2025. We look forward to developing new partnerships and working with our existing partners in 2026.

Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year from the Laguna Greenbelt Team!



PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



The above photos were taken at the Lake Forest Drive undercrossing of the ILWC. Laguna Greenbelt, Inc. Board Members and staff were joined by biologists to assess potential locations for a comprehensive camera study. The photos include the likely tracks of a coyote and a variety of bird species, including tracks of a snowy egret. This undercrossing is one of the most critical sections of the ILWC with unique challenges.

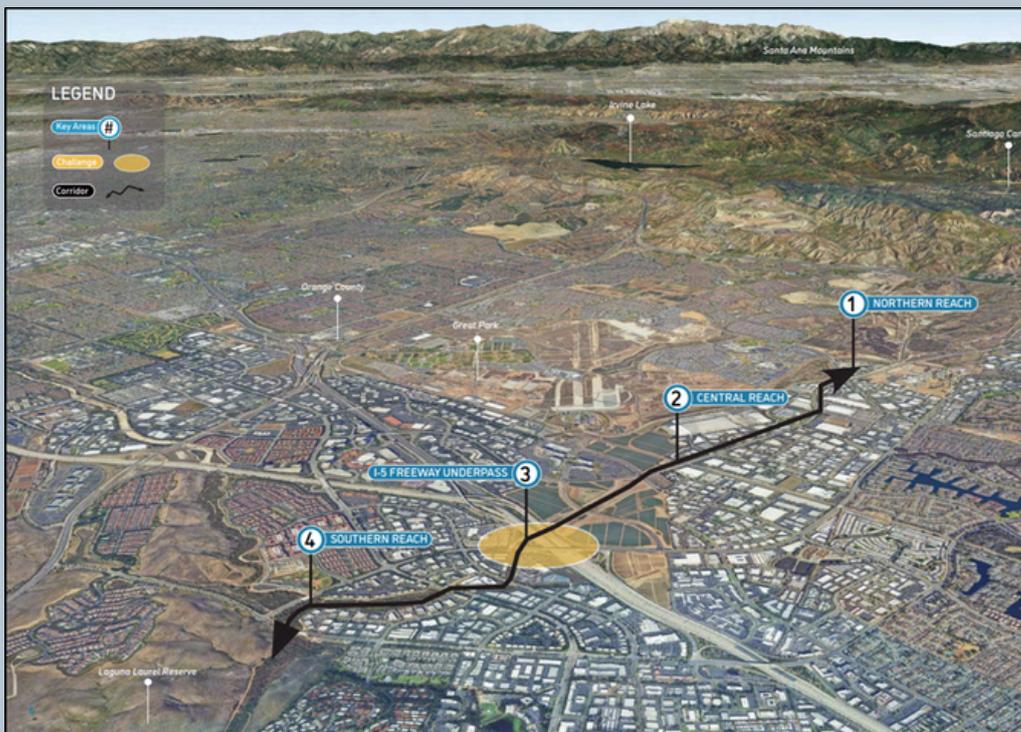


A Letter From Our President Norm Grossman

December 2025 Update

Exciting news - we are in the final stages of planning for completion of the Irvine Laguna Wildlife Corridor (ILWC). The year ahead presents great opportunities, such as increased community engagement and new partnerships, as well as significant financial challenges including budget constraints and fundraising goals.

The ILWC represents our best opportunity to establish a vital wildlife linkage between protected habitat areas in the Santa Ana Mountains and our isolated Laguna Coast Wilderness. Once completed, it will support ecosystem health by enabling wildlife—including bobcats, coyotes, deer, birds, and other species—to access essential resources such as food, water, and genetically diverse mates. With 85% of the ILWC already constructed, expert documentation of remaining barriers and targeted remediation is critical to ensure safe wildlife passage and fulfill the ILWC's ecological function.



The ILWC provides a pathway from the coast to the Cleveland National Forest

Earlier this year, a site assessment conducted by Rock Design Associates (RDA) and Pathways for Wildlife (PFW), recognized experts in the field, confirmed active use of portions of the ILWC by diverse species. However, it also identified persistent barriers, Continued on Next Page →

A Letter From Our President Norm Grossman

including debris, lack of clear sightlines, noise, human disturbance, and, in particular, the I-5 Freeway.

The I-5 remains the most challenging barrier to deal with, even though there is an existing underpass. Although this 1,200-foot-long tunnel is 25-feet wide and 15-feet high, studies have shown that no animals are currently using it due to human presence (note the extensive graffiti), lack of light, and standing water.



Addressing the existing barriers requires extensive funding. Fortunately, opportunities exist for grants from the State utilizing moneys from Proposition 4 approved last year. As you can imagine, there is intense competition throughout the State for these funds.

In order to strengthen our chances to acquire grant funding, professionally executed and scientifically valid camera trap and roadkill studies are necessary to document the need for the ILWC. To that end, the Laguna Greenbelt has approved a comprehensive camera study across the ILWC and a focused roadkill study along Laguna Canyon Road led by RDA and PFW.

The camera and roadkill studies are expensive, almost \$150,000 for the first six months and about \$125,000 per year for the next three years. Now, more than ever, we need your help to reach the next stage of making the ILWC a reality. Please consider going to our website, <https://wildlifecorridor.org/>, to stay current with our progress and make a donation.

We hope you will continue to join with us in preserving our valuable open spaces and the wildlife within as we work to extend its reach from the coast to the mountains.

Norm Grossman
President, Laguna Greenbelt, Inc.



Irvine-Laguna Wildlife Corridor

Connecting Habitats
from Mountains to Coast

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

Laguna Greenbelt, Inc. works to preserve open space and support
wildlife that depends on local habitats to thrive.

Visit our Website at:

<https://wildlifecorridor.org/>

Donate at:

<https://lagunagreenbelt.org/donate-membership/>

or mail a check to

Laguna Greenbelt, Inc.

P.O. Box 860, Laguna Beach, CA 92652

Find us On

