

## Hannigan, Edith@BOF

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**From:** Leah Vasquez <leahvasquez@cox.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 5, 2019 9:33 AM  
**To:** Public Comments@BOF  
**Subject:** APPROVAL OF THIS EMAIL FROM THE LAGUNA BEACH BEUTIFICATION COUCIL

**Warning:** this message is from an external user and should be treated with caution.

In response to receiving this important notice, I reiterate support to disperse this valuable information supporting native habitats and to stop the assault on native vegetation as well introduce non-native species in the name of fire mitigation and public safety.

The Laguna Beach Beautification Council brings information on local /endemic habitats and environmental concerns to the public through its speaker program.

We are open to suggestions and welcome suggestions for speakers to consider for 2020 addressing the critical need to plant, preserve and cultivate native flora and fauna instead of preemptive hillsides and canyon clearing of remaining native species.

With great appreciation,  
Leah Vasquez, President  
Laguna Beach Beautification Council  
Contact: (949) 494-5787

**(CalVTP) - *Opposition to VTP boondoggle***

**Dear Chairperson Gilles and Members of the Board:**

**The Vegetation Treatment Program (VTP) is an "emperor with no clothes." This emperor seeks to wastefully spend billions of dollars in taxpayer money. We ask you to get this gentleman into some proper attire**

**The VTP would remove native vegetation across a vastly over-sized 250,000-acre footprint *each year*, at massive financial and ecological cost. You may be under the impression that its purpose is to protect Californians from the devastating wind-driven fires that ravaged Paradise, Santa Rosa, Ventura, and so many other places. You may think it will save some of the billions of dollars now spent by the state and federal governments fighting these fires. But it will do none of these things.**

**CalFire now admits that the program would be *ineffective* for the fires that cause the vast majority of loss of life and property damage, which are the ones being *driven by wind*. Faced with this fact, CalFire proposes to enact the *very same program* for fires not being driven by wind, although these typically come under control and are *not* the fires of concern. Indeed, in many parts of the state, the VTP will not only do no good, but will be *counterproductive* by promoting highly flammable weeds.**

**Truly, the VTP needs a ground-up, scientific and cost-benefit assessment. We ask you to have the courage to recognize a vastly over-sized boondoggle when you see it. Please direct the Natural Resources Agency and CalFire to stop pause on the VTP and confer with fire ecologists, fire managers and stakeholders about how and where vegetation treatments can actually achieve benefit.**

**Keeping new development out of harm's way, hardening of existing structures, enforcing defensible space, highly strategic fuel breaks, and improving early warning and evacuation systems all make sense and are advised by fire scientists. But the grandiose VTP – by CalFire's own admission – *does not even address* the urgent problem of catastrophic wind-driven fires.**

**Please bring scientific and budgetary accountability to CalFire.**

**Sincerely,**

**cc: Secretary of Natural Resources**

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