



January 22, 2025

Charlton Bonham
Director, California Department of Fish and Wildlife
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support the Catalina Island Restoration Project

Dear Director Bonham,

On behalf of the Coastal Corridor Alliance I am writing to express our organization's support for the Catalina Island Restoration Project. Invasive species have adversely impacted the island for decades, and it is imperative to act to reverse the damage. Catalina Island is a special place for the many species who live on and visit the Island. With more than 60 endemic plant and animal species, 3,500 year-round residents, and a terrain that offers ample recreational opportunities for over one million annual visitors, this Restoration Project is critical. It will help protect the biodiversity that will secure climate resilience for this wonderful and unique landscape.

Similar to the island, properties we have worked to preserve sit along the Southern California coast. From providing habitat for nesting shorebirds to perches for osprey high above the landscape, it is vital to take actionable steps while funding is available to support restoration of native ecosystems.

As you know, the Island's ecosystems are at risk. Without protective measures, many native and endemic species face extinction, and the Island may no longer be able to withstand climate change. The effects of disappearing species are already evident, as native chaparral habitats transition into invasive annual grasslands. Native plants on the Island absorb and retain water and are drought-resistant, acting as natural protection against wildfire while providing important habitat for native animal species. Without them, catastrophic wildfire is

inevitable, such as the 2007 Island Fire, in which 10% of the Island burned and 700 residents and visitors were forced to evacuate.

We support the Catalina Island Restoration Project to safeguard the Island from more catastrophic impacts and bolster the Island's ability to recover.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry M. Welsh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Terry M. Welsh, MD
President