

**Urban Waters Partnership**  
**LOS ANGELES RIVER WATERSHED WORK PLAN**  
**UPDATED FEBRUARY, 2014**

**PILOT LOCATION:** Los Angeles River Watershed

**POINTS OF CONTACT:** Pauline Louie, Ambassador  
John Kemmerer, U.S. EPA

**BACKGROUND:** Includes the 51 mile Los Angeles River, with its headwaters in the Angeles National Forest to its discharge to the Pacific Ocean in Long Beach, and the over 870 square mile watershed.

Federal Agencies Participating

- Department of Agriculture – U.S. Forest Service
- Department of Commerce – National Weather Service
- Department of Defense – Army Corps of Engineers
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Department of Interior
  - Bureau of Reclamation
  - Fish and Wildlife Service
  - National Park Service
  - U.S. Geological Survey
- Department of Transportation
- Environmental Protection Agency

California State Agencies Participating

- Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Rivers and Mountains Conservancy
- Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
- State Coastal Conservancy
- State Parks

Local Government Agencies Actively Participating

- City of Glendale
- City of Los Angeles
- City of Long Beach
- City of Signal Hill
- Gateway Cities Council of Governments
- Los Angeles Unified School District
- Los Angeles County Flood Control District
- Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

Non-Governmental Organizations Actively Participating in Workplan Projects (see Appendix for full list of all Urban Waters Partners)

- Arroyo Seco Foundation
- Community Conservations Solutions
- Council for Watershed Health
- Enterprise Community Partners
- Friends of the LA River
- Heal the Bay
- LA County Bicycle Coalition
- LA Conservation Corps
- LA River Revitalization Corp
- National Forest Foundation
- Northeast Trees
- The River Project
- TreePeople
- Trust for Public Land
- Urban Rivers Institute
- Urban Semillas

**OVERALL GOALS/OBJECTIVES**

The Los Angeles River Watershed Partnership will work to protect, restore and revitalize the Los Angeles River Watershed. The Partnership will use the mission, vision and principles of the national Urban Waters Federal Partnership to guide this work:

- Promote clean urban waters
- Reconnect people to their waterways
- Water conservation
- Use urban water systems as a way to promote economic revitalization and prosperity
- Encourage community involvement through active partnerships
- Be open and honest, listening to communities
- Focus on measuring results and evaluation to fuel future success

In addition, the Partnership has also identified the following goals specific to the LA River Watershed:

- Restore ecosystem functions
- Balance revitalization with flood avoidance to ensure public safety
- Maximize multi-benefit watershed goals and reduce reliance on imported water supply.
- Foster sustainable stewardship
- Foster diverse participation and equitable community benefits respectful of the power of place.

## ONGOING PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

### PROJECTS CONTINUING FROM THE DECEMBER, 2011 WORKPLAN

- Arroyo Seco Watershed Feasibility Study
- East San Pedro Bay Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility
- Headworks Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study
- Indicators of Watershed Health Project
- LA Basin Stormwater Conservation Study
- La Kretz Bridge (formerly known as the North Atwater Bridge)
- LA River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study (ARBOR)
- Northeast LA Riverfront Collaborative
- Pacoima Wash Greenway
- Parque Dos Rios/South Gate Park Development
- River Forecast Site along the LA River
- Station Fire Restoration and Research Study
- Sepulveda Basin 1135 Ecosystem Restoration Studies
- Sun Valley Watershed Feasibility Study

### NEW PROJECTS IN THIS WORKPLAN UPDATE

- Aliso Creek Confluence Park
- Arroyo Seco Canyon
- Bending the River/La Noria Water Wheel
- Compton Creek Ecosystem Restoration
- Glendale Riverwalk Phases 2-3
- Historic Trail Certification
- LA River Natural Park
- Safe Routes to River
- Veterans Memorial Garden

### PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS (listed alphabetically)

#### 1. Aliso Creek Confluence Park (The Los Angeles River & Aliso Creek Confluence Project)

This project is located in Reseda at the confluence of Aliso Creek and the LA River. This project involves development of a new two acre park, 1.5 mi bike/pedestrian path, public art, green streets BMPs in low-moderate income area of Reseda. Land is owned by Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and LA County Public Works, and the project will utilize a \$225,000 HUD Community Development Block Grant on behalf of the City of Los Angeles. Park will demonstrate storm water infiltration and native planting, and provide passive recreational and interpretive opportunities for Creek and River. The project has involved extensive coordination with community members and neighbors, who will be directly involved in determining elements of the park.

**Involved Partners:** Trust for Public Land, HUD, LA County, City of LA, LA DWP, Jewish Home for the Aging, and the Reseda Neighborhood Council.

**Milestones:** Construction Drawings – February, 2014  
Begin Construction – early 2015  
Complete Construction – early 2016

## **2. Arroyo Seco Canyon**

Water resources enhancement, habitat restoration, and recreation improvement project funded by the state integrated regional water management program and Pasadena Water and Power. Project includes Gabrielino National Trail, Hahmongna Watershed Park and Pasadena Headworks areas. Elements include rehab of Arroyo Seco diversion structure, install amenities for Gabrielino trail, horse and passive recreation, naturalization thru removal of structures and facilities. Restoration also includes expanding existing spreading basins in Hahamongna Park area.

**Involved Partners:** Arroyo Seco Foundation, Pasadena Water and Power, U.S Forest Service

### **Milestones:**

- Begin Construction: October, 2014
- Complete Construction: October, 2015

## **3. Arroyo Seco Watershed Ecosystem Feasibility Study**

The Arroyo Seco is a major tributary and sub-watershed of the upper LA River watershed. The confluence of the Arroyo Seco with the LA River defines the boundary between the upper and lower LA River watersheds. The local sponsor of this Feasibility Study is the LA County Flood Control District. This Study covers the Arroyo Seco from Angeles National Forest boundary to 0.5 mile above the confluence with the LA River. The study has identified nine specific areas for further study during the upcoming alternatives analysis phase. The sites for potential restoration were identified based on stakeholder and public input, along with consideration of potential restoration opportunities and planning constraints.

**Involved Partners:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), LA County Flood Control District, City of Pasadena, City of La Canada-Flintridge, City of South Pasadena, City of Los Angeles, Raymond Basin Management Board, Arroyo Seco Foundation

### **Milestones:** (pending the availability of funding)

- Rescoping Charette Nov 2013
- Alternatives Milestone Aug 2014
- Tentatively Selected Plan Milestone Apr 2015
- Concurrent Public/Policy/Technical Review May 2015
- Agency Decision Milestone Aug 2015
- Final Report Milestone Feb 2016
- State and Agency Review Mar 2016
- Chief's Report Aug 2016

#### 4. Bending the River/La Noria Water Wheel

Bending the River Back into the City is an integrated water resource project by Lauren Bon and the Metabolic Studio. Located near the sites of several historic water wheels that operated in the mid-19th century to deliver water to the Pueblo de Los Angeles, the project evokes an aesthetic sense of the history of this site as well as providing significant off-sets to the region's potable water supply. The project consists of an inflatable dam diverting water from the Los Angeles River, a water wheel to lift it, and a treatment and distribution system to put the water to beneficial use. Once completed, Los Angeles River water will be re-routed into a side channel through the use of a seven-foot inflatable dam that will span the entire width of the existing concrete channel. The side channel will deliver water to a 72 foot tall water wheel, half above ground and half below, which will be known as "LA Noria". The diversion and wheel will be located on the western bank immediately south of the North Broadway Bridge, on a property currently owned by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

During normal operations, LA Noria will be powered by the River itself. Water lifted by the wheel will be filtered and disinfected and made available for beneficial uses including irrigation at the Los Angeles State Historic Park, Albion Dairy Park, and the Downey Recreation Center - all located within ¼ mile of the water wheel site.

**Involved Partners:** City of LA, LADWP, LA County, State of CA, SWRCB, LA Metro, So CA Regional Rail Authority, RWQCB, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. EPA, NMFS, U.S. FWS

#### **Milestones:**

- Final CEQA – March 2014
- Final Designs – June 2014
- Groundbreaking – August 2014
- Project Completion – July 2015

#### 5. Compton Creek Ecosystem Restoration

This project includes several activities related to the study or implementation of restoration efforts on the Compton Creek: a) The County of LA Public Works is preparing an 1135 Ecosystem Restoration Study within the Compton Creek (tributary to the LA River) watershed; b) Implementation will begin on the Compton Creek Regional Garden Master Plan; and relatedly c) The Coastal Conservancy will soon take on the next steps to advance detailed technical and habitat work in the earthen bottom creek channel within the Compton city limits. There is plenty of need for additional technical support to provide much needed performance based design elements that can be quantified and justify; flood capacity improvements, water quality, urban runoff benefits as well as habitat enhancements, and promote other benefits such as; open space, new recreational opportunities, awareness with local officials, and community involvement for long term sustainability. In addition, the partners involved with work in the area will provide coordination and communication regarding several other Compton Creek projects currently underway: Compton Creek Pilot Wetland Restoration; MRCA's Washington Elementary School Natural Park; RMC's ped and bike path along Compton Creek at Washington Carver Park (118<sup>th</sup> to 120<sup>th</sup>); LACC's proposed PED and Bike path extension along Compton Creek (120<sup>th</sup> to El Segundo Blvd).

**Involved Partners:** LA County Flood Control District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California Coastal Conservancy, Heal the Bay, City of Compton.

**Milestones:**

- Public Outreach Meeting on 1135 Study – January 2014
- Earthen Bottom Technical Studies Completed: November 2014

**6. East San Pedro Bay Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study**

The East San Pedro Bay is located off the Long Beach coastline, borders the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, and meets the mouths of the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers.

This feasibility study is to determine how best to restore the marine ecosystem in the East San Pedro Bay. USACE is the lead agency and the City of Long Beach is the local sponsor. Both agencies have agreed upon three planning objectives to guide the study: (1) Restore the ecosystem in the East San Pedro Bay; (2) Improve recreational water quality; and (3) Increase recreational water activities in the East San Pedro Bay. Examples of benefits from this study, in addition to meeting established objectives, include in-depth knowledge of the East San Pedro Bay ecosystem that can be shared with partner agencies such as NOAA and Marine Fisheries, and economic benefits from increased visitors to a cleaner, more attractive beach.

**Involved Partners:** USACE, City of Long Beach, United States Navy, United States Coast Guard, Port of Long Beach, THUMS Oil Islands, City of Seal Beach, Surfrider Foundation, Peninsula Beach Preservation Group, Carnival Cruise Line

**Milestones:** (pending availability of funding)

- Feasibility Cost Share Agreement Amendments: Feb 2014
- Public Rescoping Meeting: Spring 2014
- Feasibility Scoping Meeting (Existing Conditions Analysis) - Spring 2014
- Begin Feasibility Study Development: July 2014 (through 2017)
- Alternative Formulation Briefing - July 2016
- Draft Feasibility Study Report – November 2016
- Final Feasibility Study Report – April 2017
- Project Completion/Federal Approval – December 2017

**7. Glendale Riverwalk Phases II-III**

This is located on the northern bank of the LA River across from Griffith Park. Most of the Phase II trail extension is already built. The work starting now will add a small bridge connecting Phases I and II, an entry plaza with a river overlook where the two phases join, a park at the Verdugo Wash Confluence with the Los Angeles River, and additional interpretive signage. The Phase III work that is presently funded includes site selection and preliminary engineering for the Los Angeles River bridge that will connect Riverwalk to Griffith Park. Construction of the bridge is not yet funded. Site selection will focus on four alternative locations identified in the Phases II/III Master Plan, and will involve significant coordination with the City of Los Angeles. Phase III site selection and preliminary engineering are also scheduled for completion at end of 2014

**Involved Partners:** City of Glendale, City of LA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**Milestones:** Completion of Phase II – end of 2015  
Site Selection and Preliminary Engineering for Phase III – end of 2014

## **8. Headworks Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study**

Located in the southeastern portion of the San Fernando Valley off Forest Lawn Drive at the Los Angeles River, adjacent to Griffith Park. The Headworks Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study will evaluate ecosystem restoration through the development of riparian habitat and wetlands, creating a multi-objective project that also includes water quality improvement and passive recreation opportunities. Construction of the selected alternative is not anticipated until at least 2018, pending construction of a reservoir on the site.

**Involved Partners:** USACE, FOLAR, USFWS, CDFG, Forest Lawn Company, LA Equestrian Center, North East Trees

### **Milestones:**

- Reservoir Construction Phase: April 2012 – December 2017
- Ecosystem Restoration: November 2017 – November 2018

## **9. Indicators of Watershed Health Project**

This project is developing a suite of indicators and metrics that assess the social, economic and ecosystem health within the LA River watershed. An EPA 2012 Urban Waters Small Grant was awarded to develop the framework for assessment, and the group of stakeholders that will either participate in data collection and/or benefit from the assessment. Additional funding is being sought to allow the framework to be followed, providing an assessment of the LA Watershed. The assessment will be communicated widely to agencies, corporations, elected officials, the public, and others to stimulate discussion and promote improvement in conditions. Assessment of watershed conditions can promote cooperation and integration of environmental management for the region's watersheds via greater public awareness of the condition of the region's watersheds. The project is closely aligned with a suite of indicators that were developed for the Water Plan Update 2013 for California as well as Integrated Regional Water Management planning throughout the state. The Council for Watershed Health released a pilot assessment of the Arroyo Seco in 2010 on a CalFED grant, and worked under contract with SAWPA to provide indicators to the OWOW 2.0 plan for the Santa Ana Watershed.

**Involved Partners:** Council for Watershed Health, U.S. EPA

### **Milestones:** (pending the availability of funding)

- Establish LA River Watershed framework of goals, social and ecosystem attributes, indicators, and metrics: establish local technical advisory committee and task force consisting of community leaders
- Select Indicators for Analysis: identify available monitoring programs and data, select indicators and metrics for analysis; recruit indicator lead scientists/analysts
- Measure ecological and socio-economic conditions: use analytical tools to derive indicator scores from metrics.
- Reporting: Determine reporting mechanisms, write and publish report using a variety of media, including an interactive website and summary document
- Program sustainability: establish sustainable funding to enable regular, periodic reports.
- EPA Urban Waters Small Grant will be completed by May 2014. The broader watershed assessment effort is seeking funding for sustained work.

## **10. Juan Bautista de Anza Historic Trail Certification**

Certification of Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail by NPS in conjunction with City of LA to provide identification and national recording of continuous Recreational Trail; provide cohesive element through all restoration and recreational projects currently being planned, especially with Urban Waters

**Involved Partners:** National Park Service, City of LA

**Milestones:** Certification by early 2014

## **11. LA Basin Stormwater Conservation Study**

This project covers the LA River Watershed (in addition to Ballona Creek and San Gabriel River watersheds). This Basin Study will analyze the long-term potential of existing LA County Flood Control District (LACFCD) facilities and other local stakeholder flood control facilities to conserve stormwater, as well as analyze the potential for new facilities and changes in operations through detailed scientific, engineering, and economic analyses in order to meet the future water demands and climate change challenges. LACFCD will submit the Plan of Study to the Bureau of Reclamation in February 2012 for consideration by the Basin Study program. Potential funding of \$1 million Federal and \$1 million non-Federal.

**Involved Partners:** Bureau of Reclamation, LA County Flood Control District

### **Milestones:**

- Task 1. Project Management – 9/14
- Task 2. Water Supply and Demand Projections – 1/13
- Task 3. Downscaled Climate Change and Hydrologic Modeling – 3/13
- Task 4. Existing Infrastructure Response – 8/13
- Task 5. Develop Infrastructure and Operations Concepts – 4/14
- Task 6. Trade Off Analysis and Recommendations – 6/14
- Task 7. Final Report – 9/14

## **12. La Kretz Bridge (North Atwater Crossing)**

This new bridge will cross the LA River between North Atwater Park and Griffith Park. It will be a symbol of river redevelopment, providing connectivity and access on a multimodal basis from the North Atwater Park and neighborhoods to the east to Griffith Park and the LA River Bike Path on the west. The crossing will allow safe access for equestrian users from the stable complexes on the east to Griffith Park. Additionally, the bridge will allow for bicycle access from Atwater Park to the Los Angeles River segment of the LA bicycle trail system. The design concept proposed is a cable stayed bridge with a span of approximately 300 feet across the LA River.

**Involved Partners:** USACE, National Park Service, LA River Revitalization Corporation

### **Milestones:**

- 100% Construction docs - September 2013
- Permits pulled - March 2014



- Construction - Mid 2014

### **13. LA River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study**

An approximately 10-mile reach of the LA River within the City of LA—from the Headworks site near Griffith Park to 1<sup>st</sup> Street in Downtown LA. The LA River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) was started in 2006 with a 50 percent to 50 percent cost sharing partnership between the USACE and the City of LA. This is viewed as a critical first step to enable restoration activities contemplated by the City of LA's LA River Revitalization Master Plan. The draft Study was released for public comment in September, 2013, and the comment period ended in November, 2013. The draft Study included the USACE's preference for a restoration alternative which resulted in comments from many partner organizations urging the USACE to select an alternative with expanded restoration projects.

**Involved Partners:** USACE, City of LA Bureau of Engineering, Friends of the LA River

**Milestones:**

- Revised Study and Response to Comments - January 2014

**Associated Projects:**

**LA River Demonstration Project at the Bowtie Parcel:** aka the G-1 parcel in Taylor Yard, is located on the 2700 block of Casitas Avenue, bounded by the LA River, the rail line, the Glendale Freeway and Division St; demonstration Project will evaluate urban river restoration features and apply lessons learned during design and construction of the Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study. The Bowtie Parcel was selected for a demonstration project site because its current location, orientation, usage, and ownership provide an ideal opportunity to evaluate technical and engineering questions related to ecosystem restoration features proposed in the Study. This project was authorized via the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 in the amount of \$25 million (federal), and received \$100,000 appropriation of Construction General funds from the US Congress in FY-10. Remaining construction funds are pending appropriations. The features proposed to date include: stream-level wetlands, overbank wetlands, and river bank terraces. Partners include Corps of Engineers, City of LA Bureau of Engineering, and California State Parks. This project is pending funding.

**Taylor Yard – G2 Acquisition:** The Taylor Yard area is a widely known as the "crown jewel" of LA River revitalization and is also located within the Partnership's priority LA River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study stretch - including the existing Rio de Los Angeles State Park, future Bowtie Park (also owned by State Parks, see above, LA River Demonstration Project at the Bowtie Parcel), future affordable housing community, and the recently-opened Sonia Sotomayor Learning Academies with its LA River School. The area also includes a large, privately-owned rail parcel that, if acquired, would realize the vision of the City's River Plan as well as the 2002 vision of the California Coastal Conservancy by creating an important connection to the River in its already habitat-rich, soft-bottom Elysian Valley stretch. The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is the lead for overseeing the remediation of the G-2 Parcel. Partners include City of LA, USACE, California Department of Toxic Substances Control, U.S EPA, The River Project, Friends of LA River, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, LA River Revitalization Corporation. Funding has also been committed by the CA Coastal Conservancy. In December 2013, the LA City Council authorized the City to begin negotiations with Union Pacific about acquisition of the land.

#### **14. LA River Natural Park & Regional Access**

This project is comprised of three components that will establish a regional park on 16 acres of contiguous open space along the LA River in Studio City, and connect the adjacent L.A. River Trail and a transportation hub that will encourage non-motorized public access to the River and the Park.

L.A. River Natural Park is the medium to long term goal of a number of public agencies, elected officials and L.A. River citizens groups who want to optimize the unique regional L.A. River public access, water quality improvement, habitat restoration, scenic, and educational value of this, the last 16 acres of unprotected open space along the 22 miles of the L.A. River in the San Fernando Valley. The property is located in Studio City and runs between Whitsett and roughly Coldwater Canyon, abuts the L.A. River on the southern side and has Valley Spring Lane as a northern boundary. The L.A. River Natural Park will also serve to improve water quality through reclamation and remediation of surface runoff from the surrounding neighborhoods by creating a state-of-the-art constructed wetlands to naturally filter and clean runoff. The immediate plan for the L.A. River Natural Park requires opposition to planned zoning revisions and the development of high density housing on the site.

As a regional access point to the L.A. River, 1.5 miles of L.A. River Greenway Trail will be improved and connected to improved greenways on either side of this stretch. In addition, a City of Los Angeles public garage 400 yards to the east is envisioned as a regional bicycle hub and staging site for non-motorized access to the Trail and other passive recreational activities being planned at the Park

**Involved Partners:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, City of LA, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Community Conservation Solutions (CCS), SAVE LA River Open Space, Friends of the Los Angeles River

**Milestones:** Concept and design phase, ongoing public outreach; three grants recently awarded, seeking remaining funding; permitting, construction 2014-2016.

- LA River Greenway Trail
  - Community Workshop to Review Design – May, 2014
  - Design completed – June , 2014
  - Groundbreaking – September, 2014
- LA River Natural Park
  - Ongoing discussions with property owners
- LA River Parking Garage & Bicycle Hub
  - Host discussion with relevant City Departments and LA River groups to identify planning and signage needs – March, 2014
  - Develop summary proposal for linking parking garage with City’s planned bicycle network

#### **15. Northeast LA Riverfront Collaborative**

Pursuant to a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) \$2.25M grant to the City of Los Angeles on behalf of the HUD-DOT-EPA Federal Partnership for Sustainable Communities, this project will create an implementation strategy for the redevelopment of 2,200 acres of the Glendale Narrows portion of the LA River, guided by the policy and vision of the City of LA’s 2007 LA River Revitalization Master Plan. It will include consideration of land use, especially industrial and commercial zoning refinement, creation of integrated mobility hubs to support carpooling, bicycle use, and light rail ridership, a feasibility study on the creation of a regional food hub, and will convene a working group of business leaders and workforce development professionals to oversee a needs assessment and develop training curricula for workforce

development. The project will focus on proactive outreach to communities who would not normally participate in the planning process. The lead agency is the L.A. City Economic Workforce Development Department, and the grant will be completed by summer, 2014.

**Involved Partners:** HUD, City of LA – EWDD, Planning, BOE, County of LA – EDC, USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism's Metamorphosis Project, Occidental College's Urban Environmental Policy Institute, KCET Departures, the L.A. River Revitalization Corporation, Tierra West Advisors, L.A. Conservation Corps, and National Park Service; Design Collaborators: Dake + Luna Consultants, Mia Lehrer + Associates, LA Mas, and The Robert Group.

**Milestones (work for 2014):**

- Placemaking Project Open House
- Public Placemaking Design Competition
- Community Meetings for feedback on draft vision plan and economic development implementation strategy (VPEDIS)
- Implementation stakeholder focus groups and policy maker meetings on VPEDIS
- NELA Riverfront Vision Plan and Economic Development Implementation Strategy – Summer, 2014
  - L.A. City Commission and Committee meetings on VPEDIS
  - L.A. City Council Presentation and Resolution on VPEDIS
- NELA Riverfront Collaborative Project Evaluation and Toolkit – Summer, 2014

**16. Pacoima Wash Greenway**

The Pacoima Wash Greenway will extend eight miles along the Pacoima Wash (a tributary of the Los Angeles River) from the rugged areas near the Pacoima Dam in the Angeles National Forest to the Pacoima Wash's confluence with the Tujunga Wash in urban San Fernando Valley. This new greenway will include a multi-use trail with native California landscaping, vacant lots transformed into new neighborhood and habitat parks, and the use of natural systems and BMPs to treat and detain local stormwater run-off. The project area includes portions of the Angeles National Forest, unincorporated LA County, the City of LA communities of Sylmar and Pacoima, and the City of San Fernando. The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy has funded a study to explore site feasibility, synthesize previous planning documents related to the Pacoima Wash, and identify and prioritize opportunities to develop multiple-benefit projects. The project received additional support through a grant from the LA County Public Health's "Policies for Livable, Active Communities and Environments (PLACE) Program" and is supported by the National Park Service RTCA program. Additional work on the Pacoima Wash South Vision Plan will link existing plans for the missing southern portion of this area (Pacoima Wash to Tujunga Wash Confluence) by conducting hydrology and parcel analysis, and developing a base map. This portion is being funded by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

**Involved Partners:** MRCA, Pacoima Beautiful, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, National Park Service, USDOT

**Milestones:**

- Opening of Pacoima Wash/8<sup>th</sup> Street Park—Spring/Summer 2014
- Pacoima Wash/El Dorado Park start of construction—2015 (fully funded, currently in community outreach and design)
- Pacoima Greenway Parcel analysis AND integration of stakeholder input—complete

- Pacoima Wash Mountain Bikeway—in planning phase (including community outreach, engineering, and construction documents), to be completed in 2015
- Pacoima Wash South Vision Plan - Estimated completion by December 2015

### **17. Parque Dos Rios/South Gate Park Development**

Located at the confluence of the LA River and Rio Hondo, the property is located north of Imperial Highway, between the 710 Freeway and the LA River, with access to the LA River Bike path immediately adjacent to the site. This project includes habitat restoration and enhanced public access along the bike trail at a key connection along the Los Angeles River at its historic connection with the Rio Hondo. The Rivers and Mountains Conservancy provided a grant to the non-profit organization North East Trees to complete design and construction documents which will include bicycle and pedestrian trail amenities including signage, bike racks, a drinking fountain, shade structures, and observation decks with perimeter seating. Habitat restoration will include the re-introduction of California native plants and trees which will attract local urban wildlife.

**Involved Partners:** National Park Service, City of South Gate, Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, North East Trees, Los Angeles County Flood Control District, USACE, Watershed Conservation Authority, Caltrans, Office of County Supervisor Gloria Molina- 1<sup>st</sup> District, LA County Regional Park & Open Space District

#### **Milestones:**

- Design Completion and Groundbreaking – May 2013
- Project Completion – December 2013

### **18. River Conditions/ Information & Data Collection along the LA River**

The National Weather Service (NWS) LA/Oxnard Weather Forecast Office and the NWS California-Nevada River Forecast Center in coordination with the City of LA, LA County Department of Public Works, and the Army Corps of Engineers LA District will evaluate the potential of establishing a river forecast point along the LA River. If an appropriate location is selected, the NWS offices will develop a river forecast model for the LA River and begin issuing river forecasts to warn recreational users of flood risks. River forecasts on the LA River would provide a benefit to residents, businesses, and recreational users in close proximity to the LA River and the established river forecast location. In addition to the forecast itself, the working group will coordinate to develop a public education webpage for the river using presently available NWS data. The webpage will complement the river forecast by encouraging a culture of river safety awareness.

**Involved Partners:** NOAA-Weather Service, City of LA, LACFCD, USACE, MRCA, LA Conservation Corps, Geosyntex, Linear City, LA River Revitalization Corporation, USGS, EPA, Bureau of Sanitation, Heal the Bay, and Council for Watershed Health

#### **Milestones:**

- Coordinate establishment of forecast point - June, 2014
- Prepare scope of work for NWS - June, 2014
- Develop river forecasting model - October, 2014
- Begin issuing forecasts - October, 2014
- Coordinate development of a public education/awareness webpage - June, 2014

## **19. Safe Routes to River**

The Safe Routes to the River project is a pilot effort to develop a suite of implementation strategies and recommendations for establishing safe physical connections between LAUSD school sites and the Los Angeles River. The Safe Routes project will focus on assessing conditions and engaging students at four identified school sites along the river (Canoga Park HS, Reseda HS, John Marshall HS, and the LA River School at the Sonia Sotomayor Campus) to explore strategies and identify opportunities for increasing access to the river through enhanced routing, gateways, signage, and educational and interpretive facilities which improve opportunities to connect classroom curriculum and school-based activities to the natural environment.

**Involved Partners:** National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program, MRCA, and LAUSD

### **Milestones:**

- Project analysis and design—complete
- Next steps and document preparation—February/March 2014
- Grant submittal for Phase 2—complete
- Phase 2 River Ambassador program kickoff—September/October 2014 (pending UW small grant)

## **20. Sepulveda Basin 1135 Ecosystem Restoration Studies**

The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, in conjunction with the City of L.A. will move forward with 3 Section 1135 Ecosystem Restoration CAP projects along the L.A. River and its tributaries within the Sepulveda Basin ( Includes: 1) Encino Channel; 2) Woodley; 3) Main L.A. River Channel). These projects will study feasibility of removing concrete, biotechnical bank stabilization using native vegetation, and restoring native wildlife habitat. Local cost share will enable design and construction phases, although schedule will depend on timing of funding for each project. These projects will include significant public engagement in the project formulation stage, and USACE will seek stakeholder feedback about using these projects to restore habitat lost in Sepulveda Basin.

**Involved Partners:** USACE, The River Project, California Coastal Conservancy, City of LA Department of Recreation and Parks, Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee, LA Conservation Corps

### **Milestones:**

- Public Workshop with LA City: March, 2014
- Planning and Feasibility Study Approval – March - April, 2014
- Cost Share Feasibility Study (NEPA/CEQA) done – late , 2015
- Design Completion & Starting Construction – late 2016

## **21. Station Fire Restoration and Research**

Angeles National Forest, Headwaters of the LA River Watershed

To address impacts from the August, 2009 Station Fire in the Angeles National Forest, tree planting programs have been initiated in over 5100 acres. Much of this planting is being funded by the South Coast Air Quality

Management District and the Walt Disney Company in partnership with the National Forest Foundation. TreePeople is leading volunteer tree planting operations for the Forest Service. The USGS, in cooperation with the Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Department of Fish and Game, is studying the impact of the 2009 Station Fire on local aquatic ecosystems, debris flows, and mud slides. Other USGS research is aimed at providing information to help resource managers develop species-conservation and fire-management plans. The National Forest Foundation designated a Treasured Landscape within the Station Fire area which is the first such designation within the State of California. This designation is intended to raise awareness as well as funds to aid in the restoration of this watershed.

**Involved Partners:** U.S. Forest Service, National Forest Foundation, TreePeople, South Coast Air Quality Management District, USGS, Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, the Walt Disney Company, and Southern California Edison.

**Milestones:**

- Over the next four years, the Forest Service has plans to expand tree planting programs to over 8000 acres of the Angeles National Forest.

## **22. Sun Valley Watershed Feasibility Study**

The Sun Valley Watershed is a 2,800-acre urban watershed located approximately 14 miles northwest of downtown LA. The watershed is tributary to the LA River. The Sun Valley community suffers from chronic flooding, water quality issues, lack of recreational opportunities, and air pollution resulting from the heavy industrial, commercial, landfill, gravel mining, and auto dismantling facilities. The USACE approved a 905(b) report, indicating Federal interest in the watershed and recommending that the Study proceed into the feasibility phase. The LA Flood Control District will serve as the lead local sponsor for the Study and will work with other stakeholders to provide the required local funding for its development. The total Study cost is approximately \$3.83 million. Fifty percent will be provided by local sources and fifty percent will come from the Federal government. The Study will open the door to funding for projects that provide Environmental Restoration, Flood Mitigation, Storm Water Recharge, Water Quality, Recreation, and Open Space/Habitat.

**Involved Partners:** LA County Flood Control District, USACE, Bureau of Reclamation, City of LA, City of LA Department of Recreation and Parks, City of LA Department of Water and Power, TreePeople, Council for Watershed Health, and Sun Valley Stakeholders

**Milestones:** (pending the availability of funding)

- Feasibility Scoping Meeting (Existing Conditions Analysis) - March 2012
- Alternative Formulation Briefing - June 2013
- Final Feasibility Report – June 2014
- Project Completion - May 2020

## COMPLETED PROJECTS

### 1. Hansen Dam Campground

Located in Lakeview Terrace, CA, on Tujunga Wash, approximately one mile downstream of the confluence of Big Tujunga Wash and Little Tujunga Wash. The completed project includes construction of a new campground, planting of native species for habitat improvement and aesthetic value, created bioswales to direct stormwater into a wetlands area, rehabilitation of an existing parking lot, and construction of a new parking lot and safety features that meet resource use objectives.

**Involved Partners:** USACE, City of LA Recreation and Parks Department

### 2. LA County Municipal Stormwater Permit

On November 8, 2012, the LA Regional Water Quality Control Board reissued the LA County Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit. As municipal stormwater discharges are the primary causes of water quality impairments in the LA River Watershed, this new permit is critically important to meeting the Partnership's goal of promoting clean urban waters. The renewed permit includes Low Impact Development (aka Green Infrastructure) provisions and will incorporate Total Maximum Daily Load targets to restore water quality.

**Involved Partners:** The LA Regional Water Quality Control Board, U.S. EPA, Municipalities across the Watershed are providing input via workshops and other vehicles

### 3. North Atwater Creek Restoration and Park Expansion

The grand opening of the expanded North Atwater Park on 3900 W. Chevy Chase Drive in Los Angeles was held on March 12, 2012. This project is adjacent to the Glendale Narrows portion of the LA River, in the North Atwater Neighborhood. The restoration efforts include removal of non-native and invasive vegetation, re-grading to restore the fluvial morphology, increased infiltration of stormwater, and installation of structures to prevent trash from entering the creek through the storm drains. The completed project has educational signs, increased riparian habitat, and cleaner stormwater runoff from the neighborhood to the River. The City of LA funding for this project includes funding set aside as Supplemental Environmental Project funds originating from a Clean Water Act settlement agreement whose parties include U.S. EPA and the LA Regional Water Quality Control Board.

**Involved Partners:** City of LA, U.S. EPA, LA Regional Water Quality Control Board.

### 4. South LA Wetlands Park

This new park on 5413 Avalon Boulevard in Los Angeles was opened on February 9, 2012. The City of LA used City funds (including Supplemental Environmental Project funds originating from a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Clean Water Act settlement agreement) and EPA Brownfields grant funds in the cleanup and restoration of a nine-acre site historically used for railcar maintenance. Constructed wetlands treat

stormwater prior to discharge to the LA River. This Park provides valuable recreational space for a densely populated urban area.

**Involved Partners:** City of LA, U.S. EPA, LA Regional Water Quality Control Board

## 5. Tujunga Wash Greenway

Located in Valley Glen, near Sherman Way

On August 15, 2012 this project, located in Valley Glen, near Sherman Way was completed. It established a riparian corridor and create wildlife habitat along Tujunga Wash, a tributary to the LA River. The Tujunga Wash Ecosystem Restoration Project is a nine acre, 3000 foot long site that connects directly to two additional downstream projects owned and maintained by LA County Flood Control District, increasing the total length of the corridor to 13,200 feet.

**Involved Partners:** USACE, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, LA County Flood Control District

## AT- LARGE PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Establishment of Recreational Zone, Paddling Programs – In 2011 and 2012, the first LA River recreational boating program was held in the Sepulveda Basin in the San Fernando Valley. After gaining the approval of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the LA Conservation Corps managed this program, which accommodated over 2000 participants. In the summer of 2013, the City of LA and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority established a pilot recreational use zone in a 1.5 mile stretch of the River in the Elysian Valley portion of the City. This provided opportunities for kayaking, fishing, and other recreational activities. The pilot recreational use zone was in place until Labor Day, 2013. There is widespread interest in continuing programs like these in the future.

**Urban Waters Support:** The Partnership supports its members that are the permitting agencies - US Army Corp of Engineers and the County of Los Angeles, notably as they continue to implement pilot programs, identify site-specific projects and explore pathways to mainstream recreational programs related to the River and Watershed. Paddling and other active and passive recreational uses are activities that help carry out the Partnership's goals to reconnect communities to their urban waterways.

Greenway 2020 - As part of a larger economic development strategy, Los Angeles River Revitalization Corp's Greenway 2020 campaign is working with public and private partners to complete a continuous 51-mile Greenway adjacent to the LA River by the year 2020. 26 miles have already been connection, and LARRC is working to fill in the gaps so the path would run continuously from San Fernando Valley to Long Beach, complete with amenities along the way. LARRC is working on securing funding for this project, as well as coordinating site-specific projects with partner agencies. Involved partners currently include the County of LA, City of LA, LA Conservation Corps, and the LA Bicycle Coalition.

**Urban Waters Support:** As an important regional initiative to connect elements of many other Work Plan activities, the Partnership is assisting LARRC and other Greenway 2020 partners with a strategy to secure federal Alternative Transportation and economic development resources. The work of the Partnership's



transportation working group will support the Campaign, and the Partnership looks forward to further engagement as site-specific programming is being developed.

Long Beach Riverlink -The Long Beach RiverLink is a community-driven study and visioning project that identifies multi-purpose, open space opportunities along the east bank of the Los Angeles River and connections to surrounding neighborhoods. The project is funded by the Long Beach Department of Parks, Recreation, and approved by the City Council on January 14, 2003; this is a special program of the San Pedro Bay Estuary Project. The RiverLink vision creates a network of gateways, pathways, connections, and destinations. Visitors to the RiverLink system will enter the system through a gateway announcing their arrival into the Los Angeles River system and will travel along a lively, tree-lined pathway. Transit connections will allow visitors to move between pathways on their way to vibrant destination parks lining the river channel, from the San Pedro Bay to other parts of the City. The RiverLink vision will help develop approximately 176 acres of continuous open space, and potential park-lands along the Los Angeles River towards their ultimate goal of 1080 new acres of open space.

**Urban Waters Support:** The Partnership continues to develop strong coordination with its local government partners throughout the entire 51 miles of the River. The stretches of the River in the City of Long Beach are a vital portion of the “linear park” being restored, and the Partnership will work with the City to link similar upstream efforts.

River Rover - Create mobile exhibit (travel trailer) to bring information/education to residents, visitors, schools, special events - "Bring People to River, River to People"; includes self-directed interpretive displays with video, interactive educational signage and opportunities for lab analysis with scientific equipment.

**Urban Waters Support:** FoLAR is a key participant in the Partnership and the River Rover will increase the profile of all River restoration and revitalization efforts. The Partnership will continue to promote the River Rover and its educational activities with local stakeholders.

Sennett Creek Park – This creek runs through Forest Lawn cemetery, through a culvert under Forest Lawn Drive and discharges into the LA River. Consideration is being given to naturalizing the currently culverted portion of the Creek, and potentially tying it into the Headworks project. The proposed project will provide significant management of run off from adjacent uses before reaching the River, and create additional opportunities for stormwater infiltration. Park design will also connect major bike/greenway projects on either side.

**Urban Waters Support:** This project includes key linkages to major Workplan projects, as well drawing the participation of private stakeholders such as Forest Lawn. The project has commitment of resources from Forest Lawn, and is awaiting public funding for the gap. The Partnership will continue to promote this project and assist Northeast Trees in identifying opportunities to operationalize the project.

Veterans Memorial Garden - Plans for development of community garden on Army National Guard Armory land facing LA River in Van Nuys. This would be a memorial to veterans, and would provide a connection along LA River to nearby rehabilitation and veterans facilities. This project seeks to connect and to improve safety of bikeway segments in the area and behind the facility; the proposed enhancements to the bikeway would create more of a greenway behind the facility, thereby connecting the garden/park to the linear path.

**Urban Waters Support:** The Partnership will continue to support the efforts of Los Angeles Conservation Corps, the City of LA and the Veterans stakeholders as they move forward in the community outreach and planning. When appropriate, the Partnership can assist in reaching out to further federal involvement.

## **PARTERSHIP POLICY ENGAGEMENTS**

- High Speed Rail Project – The Partnership has held several meeting with representatives of the California High Speed Rail Authority to discuss how the possible alignment of new rail infrastructure can be coordinated with LA River revitalization plans.
- I-710 Corridor Project EIS/EIR – The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has prepared a draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) evaluating alternatives for widening the I-710 freeway, which runs parallel to the LA River. Comments on this DEIS were due in September, 2012. Many of the Partnership organizations are interested in this project, and it’s been suggested that project planners should consult with the Partnership on integrated plans for this freeway expansion with River revitalization plans.
- Taylor Yard G-2 Parcel Cleanup Planning – The Partnership has consulted with the California Department of Toxic Substances Control over plans for cleanup of the Taylor Yard G-2 parcel. A proposed Remedial Action Plan was release for public comment in the fall of 2013, and partner organizations provided comments on this proposed plan during the comment period which closed in November, 2013.

## **OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE THE PARTNERSHIP**

### **Working Groups**

The members of the Urban Waters Los Angeles River Partnership are diverse, capable and passionate advocates for Urban Waters goals. The Partnership has provided a platform by which these stakeholders can coordinate efforts and help to identify efficient and effective ways for federal interests to complement this work. The Partnership continues to serve as a facilitator of this work with specific Partnership Work Groups to focus stakeholder expertise around key topics that cut across many of the Work Plan projects:

- **Transportation/Greenways:** provide a clearinghouse of communication and coordination related to transportation activities occurring in the region, especially as they impact River restoration and revitalization; identify and help implement a strategy for obtaining public resources to support all greenway-related projects
- **Housing/Community Development:** create linkages with housing and community development interests along the River or in River communities; advise ongoing planning and land use decisionmaking, and provide local leadership in encouraging “river-oriented” development that will protect restoration priorities while balancing community benefits.
- **Education:** revitalization will require significant public awareness and education, and this group will identify opportunities to work with youth and adult initiatives to expand stewardship of a restored River for its natural and green space benefits.

## **Expanding Federal Involvement**

Urban Waters activities continue to identify a need for involvement by federal agencies currently not active with the Partnership, and to expand the engagement of current federal partners in ongoing work. The Partnership has prioritized these needs for the future as it continues discussion with other agencies and develops opportunities for River-related activities to become a part of an agency's local priority. Following up on activities such as the 2013 roundtable with the Federal Partnership for Sustainable Communities that the Urban Waters Partnership helped host – future activities will seek to further develop this engagement and to showcase the coordination and leverage of sister federal initiatives.

### **URBAN WATERS NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP *Los Angeles River Pilot – Active Agency Engagement***

- Corporation for National & Community Service
- ***National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)***
  - i. ***National Weather Service***
- National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
- ***U.S. Department of Agriculture***
  - i. ***U.S. Forest Service***
- ***U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)***
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Department of Energy
- ***U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)***
- ***U.S. Department of Interior***
  - i. ***Bureau of Reclamation***
  - ii. ***Fish and Wildlife Service***
  - iii. ***National Park Service (NPS)***
  - iv. ***U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)***
- U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- ***U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)***
- ***U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)***

APPENDIX

**Urban Waters Los Angeles River Partnership**

Arroyo Seco Foundation	Mercy Housing
Bureau of Reclamation	Metro
CA Coastal Conservancy	National Forest Foundation
CA Water Quality Control Board	Natural Resources Defense Council
California High Speed Rail Authority	Northeast Trees
City of Glendale	National Park Service
City of Long Beach	Rivers and Mountains Conservancy
City of Los Angeles	San Fernando Valley Audubon Society
City of Signal Hill	Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
Community Conservations Solutions	Save LA River Open Space
Council for Watershed Health	State of California
County of Los Angeles	The River Project
Enterprise Community Partners	TIERRA WEST Advisors
Environment Now	TreePeople
EPA	TREEPEOPLE
Federal Reserve Bank of SF	Trust for Public Land
Friends of the LA River	Urban Rivers Institute
Gateway Cities COG	Urban Semillas
Geosyntec	US Dept of HUD
Heal the Bay	US Fish and Wildlife Service
LA Conservation Corps	US Forest Service
LA County Bicycle Coalition	USACE
LA River Revitalization Corp	USGS
LAUSD	

# Map: Los Angeles River Watershed



Credit: Council for Watershed Health