

**DATE:** May 18, 2015  
**TO:** RMC Governing Board  
**FROM:** Mark Stanley, Executive Officer  
**SUBJECT:** Item 7D: Project and Liaison Activities

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**Regional Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Planning:** With the California Department of Water Resources having announced an additional round of Proposition 84 IRWM Implementation Grants the Greater Los Angeles County Sub-regional Committees requested local agencies and organizations to submit their project proposals. The sub-regions are in the process of holding meetings to score and rank projects against the State guidelines. High scoring projects from each region will be submitted to the Leadership Committee for final selection, inclusion in the regional submission to the Department of Water Resources. Final selection is scheduled to take place at the May 27, 2015 meeting.

**San Gabriel Mountains National Monument:** Following the October 10, 2014 Presidential Proclamation establishing the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument, two separate planning processes have been initiated. The first is the preparation of an amendment to the Angeles National Forest Land Management Plan, referred to as the Monument Management Plan. When complete, the resulting planning document will guide management of monument resources for the next 10 to 15 years. The process to develop that plan includes public input as mandated by the 2012 U.S. Forest Service Planning Rule, which requires transparent, thoughtful and frank deliberation and engagement of diverse perspectives and interest. Currently, the U.S. Forest Services has finalized its public engagement plan and will be conducting public meetings shortly.

The second planning activity involves the establishment of a San Gabriel Mountains National Monument Collaborative. An emerging purpose for this Collaborative is to represent diverse stakeholder perspectives in identifying, prioritizing, and advocating for investments, management objectives, and values that sustainably benefit the Angeles National Forest, the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument, and all the communities throughout the region. Facilitated by the National Forest Foundation, the collaborative is currently formulating its procedures and processes. The Collaborative includes participation of RMC Governing Board Member Margaret Clark, RMC representative and Mayor for the City of Rosemead.

**San Gabriel National Recreation Area:** The RMC continues to track (Chu): San Gabriel National Recreation Area Act. The bill was introduced to Congress and referred to the House Natural Resources Committee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation on June 12, 2014. However, no further action was taken during the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress. Co-sponsors included Congressman Tony Cardenas (D-CA29) and Adam Schiff (D-CA28). Proposed Wilderness additions and Wild and Scenic River designations within the Angeles National Forest are also being tracked by the RMC staff.

Although Congresswoman Judy Chu released draft legislation earlier this year for public comments, we are not currently aware of any public meeting or activities related to this topic. Staff will continue to monitor.

**RMC ACTIVE PROJECTS**

**RMC 15<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration**

The RMC 15<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration was a complete success, it was held on April 10 at Legg Lake Fishing Pier within the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area. RMC and WCA staff worked diligently in order to deliver a flawless program.



**Gateway Cities Greenways and Rivers Master Plan (RMC 13002):** The grant will develop a greenway and green infrastructure plan for the missing middle section of the Los Angeles River and surrounding Gateway cities region. The plan will provide the necessary momentum to pursue further investment for improvement along this lower section of the LA River as well as the Lower San Gabriel River on the scale that is currently planned for the LA River section through downtown Los Angeles.

Presentations were made to both the Gateway Council of Governments Planning Directors and City Managers in March 2015. Initial requests for data held by the cities has been made and as the program rolls out additional outreach will be conducted to collect and disseminate GIS and other planning documents and materials as the Master Plan develops.

In addition, the planning effort includes outreach and engagement to underserved communities, which will be conducted in collaboration with IRWMP DAC coordinator program.

Matching funds in the amount of \$250,000 provided by the RMC was awarded to the co-applicant on this project North East Trees. Additionally, \$250,000 in-kind services, and perhaps some cash contribution, were pledged by the Gateway Council of Governments and partner cities. In addition, to seamlessly implement the project and prepare a single cohesive master plan document the co-applicants seek to enter into reciprocal contractual agreements with each other to complete the grant tasks.

The goal of the project is to provide a planning document and tools to allow cities and the region to move projects forward and be successful in attaining funding from a variety of sources to improve health and the environment through green infrastructure, parks, trails, greenways and river linkages within the Gateway Cities and along the Lower Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers.

**Azusa Geology Park (RMC10009):** The City of Azusa, in cooperation with California Resource Connections (CRC) developed a City owned parcel into a geology interpretive park. The park is approximately 0.5-acre located east of the San Gabriel River Bike Trail and will create new access to the San Gabriel River regional bike trail connecting it to a quarter mile of underutilized City trail enhanced with native landscaping and interpretative signage. Construction was completed on December 30, 2013 but the City of Azusa and RMC are working together to complete the project and close out the grant by June 30, 2015. CRC requested a timeline extension through June 30, 2015 to close out the grant and to have the City take ownership of the park.

**Coyote Creek-Los Alamitos Improvement Project (RMC3318):** The City of Los Alamitos is in the process of working with LA County Flood Control District to update the existing Use Agreement for the bikeway to include operation and maintenance of the Coyote Creek river trail that runs through the city's limits. The update to the Use Agreement will support the planned bike way upgrade (paving, striping, and signage/gates) proposed by the City to complete the balance of the approved park project.

**De Forest Park Wetland Restoration Project (RMC10006):** The City of Long Beach is requesting to amend the scope of work, timeline, and budget given the bids exceed the funding available for this project, thus the City of Long Beach is proposing to phase the project and have the first phase of the project completed by June 30, 2016, please see Item 9 for more information.

**Camp Shiwaka Urban Forest and Discovery Trail (RMC 13005):** RMC provided funding for the development and enhancement of Camp Fire's urban forest and a new trail at Camp Shiwaka which includes extensive native landscaping, interpretive signage, creation of vernal pools, improved ADA accessibility and additional improvements to the outdoor amphitheater.

Camp Shiwaka celebrated their grand opening of the trail on April 25 and several RMC Board Members attended including Board Member Margret Clark and Ed Wilson.



**Willowbrook Walking Path/Compton Creek (14003):** The RMC will be providing a grant in the amount of \$300,000 to the Los Angeles Conservation Corps as part of the Willowbrook Walking Path Compton Creek extension. The LACC applied for an Urban Greening Grant through the Strategic Growth Council and was awarded the full request in the amount of \$798,815.

This project includes the creation of a ½ mile permeable walking path and 2,700 linear foot by 6 foot riprap swale constructed with river rock to capture debris and treat runoff before it enters Compton Creek. Other funding partners include the State Coastal Conservancy and the Office of Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas (2<sup>nd</sup> District). Matching funds provided by the funding partners and the grant funds received by the Strategic Growth Council bring the total project cost to \$1,698,815.

**San Gabriel River Trail Signage Improvements (RMC12002):** The outcome of this project is to improve interpretive signage along the San Gabriel River bike trail throughout the City of Azusa and include areas south of the Azusa Geology Park to the current trail end along Highway 39 near the entrance to the Azusa River Wilderness Park.

The project elements will include; 1. Placement of mileage reference signage to key locations and features along the trail, 2. Re-design and replacement of insufficient interpretive signage along the San Gabriel River bike trail and 3. Installation of a “staging area” signs visible from Highway 39. Currently the grantee has completed design work of the interpretive signage but has requested a timeline extension through June 30, 2015 to close out the grant.

**El Dorado Nature Center South Lake Restoration Project (RMC13004)**: The project is located at the El Dorado Nature Center in the City of Long Beach and includes an improved arrival experience with a new entry statement and signage, improvements to the outdoor amphitheater for educational sessions and events and an ADA compliant pedestrian bridge and trails leading from the parking lot entrance to the El Dorada Nature Center building. The City of Long Beach has completed the design work and public workshops to receive input for the proposed development.

## **WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**

**Azusa River Wilderness Park Project**: Design development for front entry improvements at the River Wilderness Park has entered into development of 30% construction documents. Included in this effort is the design development for approximately one half of the park, located closest to State Route 39. As identified in the adopted River Wilderness Park Master plan, the design work includes a proposed roundabout on State highway, extension of the Azusa Bike Path into the park, and other site programming that includes a pavilion, bathrooms, trail systems, river overlooks, an adventure play area, and a special use camp area. Signage and utility planning, undated CEQA analysis, and a concept development for a future concessioner building (café and retail space) is also included as part of this effort.

**Citrus Grove Heights Bike Stop**: This property is located along the San Gabriel River and trail, just north of Beverly Blvd in the City of Pico Rivera. The property was acquired through a Chapter 8 tax default sale by the County of Los Angeles by the MRCA on behalf of the WCA. MRCA has executed the grant deed and along with the WCA is working with the Title Company to clear any remaining title items before close of escrow scheduled for January 30, 2015.

Recent activities have included filing of Notice of Exemption with County of Los Angeles, thumbnail conceptual site development drawings, and processing of necessary documents to complete transfer of real property.

**City of Los Alamitos' Coyote Creek River Parkway**: The City of Los Alamitos is working with the contractor to complete reseeding and planting activities in areas that did not take initially as establishment activities continue.

Phase 2 of the project, utilizing grant savings, will involve bikeway improvements interpretive signage and potentially a decorative entry gates. The City has requested WCA's support to complete the interpretive features and facilitate communication with LA County Flood Control district in their placement and install.

**Duck Farm Project**: The Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) has processed the transfer of their pledged amount, in support of constructing the river overlook, to WCA's account with the County Auditor Controller.

AECOM, has not yet completed the pick-up of permit agency updates to Construction Documents. Once update is complete an updated Construction Document permit set will be submitted to each agency for final review, approval and issuance of permits or consent as applicable. Upon receipt of agency approvals, a For Construction set will be issued along with a Request for Bids posting.

WCA has received some interest by Green Technology entities to invest in the use of and demonstration of green products at the Duck Farm and potential capital improvements to the Farm house, equestrian center, maintenance barn and potential realization of the 'energy garden' concept for the entry park. Preliminary discussions with interest group is set to be held before the end of the month.

**Emerald Necklace:** The WCA is managing the Emerald Necklace Feasibility Study and Implementation Planning Project with the purpose of identifying trail connection and urban greening projects throughout the 17-mile network. This work is being conducted in collaboration with members of the Emerald Necklace Coordination Committee, which includes staff from the RMC, Amigos de los Rios, County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation, Los Angeles Flood Control District, and County of Los Angeles First Supervisorial District.

The Implementation Report is scheduled to be complete in late spring/early summer of 2015, and the final Program EIR is scheduled to be certified early 2016. These activities will complete the Feasibility Study and Implementation Planning Project initiated in 2011. This final report will detail the necessary steps in constructing a suite of priority projects identified out of the previously completed feasibility study, while the EIR will outline the aggregated environmental impacts of these projects at a programmatic level and identify further steps that must be taken to meet the CEQA Statute and Guidelines. Priority projects focus on development of trail connections to and within Whittier Narrows Regional Park, trail development along the Rio Hondo, and development of a 'Quarry Clasp' trail connection.

**Mt Baldy Habitat & Open Space:** With the completion of the property acquisition of 237 +/- acres, staff has finalized informational and operational signs which will be installed via an Eagle Scout project before the end of May.



**San Gabriel River Confluence with Cattle Canyon Project:** The Cattle Canyon Project seeks to address unsustainable recreation practices, which include habitat disturbance and increased risk to human health from water contact recreation. Other goals of the project seek to improve safety, and to enhance the visitor experience and quality of recreational amenities provided along the river.

Included within the current Phase 1 of Cattle Canyon Project are a planning study and an outreach program focused on the prevention of specific harmful recreational behaviors through an information campaign meant to build awareness among site users. The former of these two elements, the planning study, includes a comprehensive site assessment and conceptual planning process that has identified opportunities for physical improvements, and to a lesser extent, management considerations that will improve site conditions.

Current project activity relates to the planning process. Following the completion of site assessments and a feasibility analysis, BlueGreen Consulting, the lead planning and design consultant on the project, has begun preparing three conceptual alternative plans, focusing primarily on physical site improvements. Each of the three alternatives will present different levels of programming that accommodate different levels of use. These alternatives will be refined based on comments from the advisory committee, as well as targeted stakeholder outreach. Once the final three alternatives are prepared, which is anticipated for be sometime in June, a public input process will begin to develop a preferred plan. Detailed of this public input process are still yet to be determined, including funding, but staff anticipates a collaborative effort with the U.S. Forest service.

**South Gate Habitat Restoration Project/Parque dos Rios:** Additional plan set comments have been received from City of South Gate and are being implemented into the plan set by the design consultant North East Trees. Once permits have been secured, WCA staff will coordinate with Willdan to complete the construction bid process. WCA has submitted an informal request to LACFCD for their consideration to utilize their water line to irrigate the proposed park during its establishment period before being released from supplemental water.

**Walnut Creek Habitat & Open Space:** Acquired in 2008, the Walnut Creek Habitat and Open Space Property is a total of 60.8 acres. It is located directly east of Bonelli Regional Park and along the Walnut Creek riparian corridor. Approximately 6.7 acres are owned by the City of San Dimas and 54 acres are owned by the WCA. The City's portion is directly adjacent to the Loma Vista Park, creating a continuous property that will enlarge the park and open it up to the natural open space area.

Prior to beginning the Prop A funded phase 1 development of the conceptual plan, the City issued a contract for CEQA analysis and document preparation. The City and WCA has also agreed that the WCA will act as the lead agency to CEQA although the City will fund the CEQA planning consult fees. Prior to proceeding with the CEQA analysis, the WCA and City will enter into an MOU pertaining to the phase 1 development and management.

The WCA also continues to work with the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, an adjacent property owner, to address potential lot-line adjustments, land swaps, and utility easement issues. An agreement addressing all of these matters is seen as a necessary precursor to completion of the Phase 1 development.

## **SAN GABRIEL RIVER DISCOVERY CENTER AUTHORITY**

**San Gabriel River Discovery Center:** The SGRDCA Governing Board meeting took place on December 17, 2014. The Board approved a preferred alternative for the construction of the SGR Discovery Center, acceptance of funding and services provided for information dissemination, approval of an audit services contract, acceptance of Open Space District funds from the County of Los Angeles, adoption of an updated project workplan for SGRDCA SEP fund expenditure, approval of an agreement for delivery of EcoVoices program services and approval of budgetary expenditures.

**LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS AUTHORITY**

The LCWA hired Moffatt & Nichol to complete the restoration feasibility study for the entire Los Cerritos Wetlands and the anticipated completion date is early Fall 2015. Several technical studies such as the Biological Resources and Watershed Impacts Reports have been completed and are posted on the CRP website, <http://intoloscerritoswetlands.org>. Currently the LCWA is restoring Zedler Marsh through several grants that were awarded in 2014 including the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District, Fourth Supervisorial District Prop A Funds and RMC Trails Grant. In addition, the LCWA has also entered into contract with Orange County Flood Control District to provide Wetland Restoration Services and Supplies. Following are the upcoming public events for Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewardship Program.



Presented by:



Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority

**Upcoming Public Events**

**Monthly Habitat Restorations:**  
 LCW Land Trust & Aquarium of the Pacific sponsor our Zedler Marsh restoration planting events  
 10:30am-12:30pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month  
 Upcoming dates: Sat. Jan 3<sup>rd</sup>, Feb 7<sup>th</sup>, Mar 7<sup>th</sup>, Apr 4<sup>th</sup>, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, June 6<sup>th</sup>  
 Participants are eligible to win a free ticket to the Aquarium of the Pacific and other prizes!

**Wetlands Property Land Tours:**  
 LCW Land Trust sponsors our Land Tour program  
 8:00 am – 10:00am on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month.  
 Contact [ejlambe@verizon.net](mailto:ejlambe@verizon.net) for tour details.  
 Upcoming dates: Sat. Jan 3<sup>rd</sup>, Feb 7<sup>th</sup>, Mar 7<sup>th</sup>, Apr 4<sup>th</sup>, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, June 6<sup>th</sup>

**Special Events:**  
 El Dorado Audubon sponsors a monthly Bird Walk  
 Starting at 8:00am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month.  
 Contact [eldoradoaudubon@yahoo.com](mailto:eldoradoaudubon@yahoo.com) for tour details.

LCW Land Trust sponsors our Kayak Tour program  
 9:00am – 12:00pm on certain weekend days each month.  
 Contact [ejlambe@verizon.net](mailto:ejlambe@verizon.net) for tour details.

**January - June 2015  
Public Event Calendar**

**ALL PUBLIC EVENTS MEET AT THE  
CORNER OF 1<sup>ST</sup> & PCH IN SEAL BEACH**  
 See map on reverse for location

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Participate in the **exploration and ecological restoration** of 200 acres of coastal habitat at **Los Cerritos Wetlands**  
 Service-learning credits are provided at all events.

The wetlands are wildlands; please dress accordingly.  
**Closed toed shoes required.** We encourage reusable water containers.  
 Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult.

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To learn more about the habitats and animals of Los Cerritos Wetlands, please check our websites:  
[www.intoloscerritoswetlands.org](http://www.intoloscerritoswetlands.org)  
[www.lcwetlands.org](http://www.lcwetlands.org)  
 saveloscerritoswetlands on Facebook

To request a restoration or education event for your group or organization, please contact:  
[iwanttohelp@TidalInfluence.com](mailto:iwanttohelp@TidalInfluence.com)

**Thanks to Our Partners in Conservation:**








