

**DATE:** September 28, 2015  
**TO:** RMC Governing Board  
**FROM:** Mark Stanley, Executive Officer  
**SUBJECT:** Item 8D: Project and Liaison Activities

---

**Regional Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Planning:** Projects selected in May by the Leadership Committee totaled \$36.4 million for the implementation of 20 proposed water resources projects from throughout the five LA County Sub-regions. DWR is expected to announce preliminary scoring results in November.

**San Gabriel Mountains National Monument:** The San Gabriel Mountains National Monument Community Collaborative continues to meet monthly to provide recommendation to the U.S. Forest Service for development of an interim national monument forest plan. The group is supporting the Forest Service with comments on the “Need to Change” assessment under development. There are four Need to Change Committee working groups providing comments on Transportation, Land Use, Minerals, and Recreation. RMC Board member Margaret Clark, Mayor of Rosemead is Co-Chair of the Land Use Committee.

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. In formally initiating this planning process, the Angeles National Forest held a series of public meetings earlier this summer in June 2015. These meetings provided the public, agencies, and other groups an opportunity to learn about the Monument, speak directly with Forest Service staff, and provide input into the Management Plan. The second planning activity involves the establishment of a San Gabriel Mountains National Monument Community Collaborative. An emerging purpose for this Community 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.

**San Gabriel National Recreation Area:** The RMC continues to track the bill by Congresswoman Judy 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**

**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 December 30, 2015. In addition, the City of Azusa has assured the RMC that the Geology Park will be accepted at their next City Council meeting and assure the new park is added to their Parks and Recreational Department.

**Coyote Creek-Los Alamitos Improvement Project (RMC3318):** The City of Los Alamitos finalized this project and had a Grand Opening for the trail improvements earlier this summer in July. Part of this trail improvement included finalizing a Joint Use Agreement with the 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 park boasts a walking trail, native landscape, seating area, interpretive graphics and decorative ironwork sculpted gate to the River trail.

**De Forest Park Wetland Restoration Project (RMC10006):** The RMC approved a grant amendment to amend the scope of work, timeline, tasklist and budget given the bids exceeded the funding available for this project. Currently the City of Long Beach is coordinating with their grantor agencies, the Coastal Conservancy and the Natural Resources Agency to determine if the revised scope of work will indeed fulfill the intent of the grant funds. Once all the grantees have approved the revised timeline and budget, then the City will rebid the project which is tentatively is scheduled to begin construction before December 30, 2015.

**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, improved ADA accessibility and additional improvements to the outdoor amphitheater. Camp Shiwaka has received additional funds to complete their trail improvements as part of the Long Beach Bike Trail and with matching funds from the LA County Prop A funds with a completion date of June 30, 2016.

**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. Additional matching funds were committed by other project partners including the State Coastal Conservancy and the Office of Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas (2nd 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.

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.

**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 interpretative signage but has requested a timeline extension through July 30, 2016 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 will place the contract out to bid this fall.

**Los Cerritos Wetlands Trails Improvement Project (RMC14002):** This project is located in the City of Long Beach at intersection of Studebaker Road and Westminster Avenue. The grant agreement includes: (1) development and improvements of trail network in and around Los Cerritos Wetlands specifically at Zedler Marsh, (2) install interpretive signage and associated native landscaping and (3) remove trash, debris, non-native plants, improve fencing and gates, install temporary irrigation and improve the native plant nursery through development of an outdoor laboratory and classroom. Currently the LCWA is obtaining coastal developmental permits for the proposed work.

#### **WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**

**Azusa River Wilderness Park Project:** Azusa River Wilderness Park (RWP) is an approx. 75.7 acre property which is slated to provide unique wilderness experiences in the lower San Gabriel River Canyon: engaging landscapes, gathering spaces, thriving habitats, and a regional hub and welcome center for the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument.

Based on the 2012 adopted RWP Master Plan, staff is currently reviewing the design development of the RWP Entry Improvements. Key benefits of the RWP Entry Project include conserving and enhancing open space, preserving ecologically significant land for the public, encouraging outdoor activity, and providing facilities to cultivate awareness, appreciation, and stewardship of our natural resources. A proposed open-air pavilion and interactive nature play area embody these benefits as central parts of the plan to draw people into the park, providing enriching spaces to experience, and to engage the public in exploration.

Design consultants working on the design development of the RWP Entry Improvements are in the process of preparing 90% construction documents. Throughout this design process staff and the design team are continuing to coordinate with permitting and regulatory agencies that have purview over the project, including Caltrans and the City of Azusa. Updated CEQA analysis and documentation is also underway that will incorporate the proposed improvements on the Canyon Inn Property that have not been previously reviewed under the existing RWP Mitigated Negative Deceleration.

To fund these proposed improvements, staff has also prepared and submitted several grant proposals over the course of the Summer totaling approximate \$3M in funding request. Details of these grant proposals are included under a separate agenda item.

**Citrus Grove Heights Bike Stop** A concept plan for this pocket park on the San Gabriel River Trail has received preliminary approval from stakeholders.

The next steps require additional survey work and a grading plan. The Flood Control District is currently reviewing their capacity to assist with these engineering tasks under the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) agreement with the WCA. Feedback and preliminary approvals have supported bikeway access into the site, prefabricated shade structure, on-site storage, hitching posts, a bike service station, interpretive site elements, and landscaping.

Key stakeholders include the City of Pico Rivera, City of Whittier (due to adjacent water conveying infrastructure), Los Angeles County Flood Control District, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works Bike Coordinators, County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation Planning Division, BikeSGV, and Equestrian Joint Council.

**Duck Farm Project:** Updated plan sets have been resubmitted to LA County departments for final permit plan check approvals via new online system. Staff has request in with first District representative to assemble a red team plan set review session.

**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.

Throughout August and September the project planning consultants have been conducting updates to the project description for the 16 identified Phase 1 Implementation Projects. Once complete these description will form the basis of the development of an implementation plan and a Programmatic EIR. These planning documents, slated to be completed over the next six to seven months, will position these projects for effective and efficient implementation among the various Emerald Necklace partner agencies, with the plans clearly identifying implementation steps, required funding, and further environmental documentation that will be required.

**Gateway Cities Greenways and Rivers Master Plan:** With a grant from the Strategic Growth Council and partner collaboration the WCA is developing a visionary green infrastructure plan for the Gateway Cities Region. The purpose is to provide a planning document and tools that support cities and the region to move coordinated projects forward for the improvement of health and the environment within the Gateway Cities and along the lower Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers. These projects will include green infrastructure, parks, trails, greenways, and river linkages.

Working within an evolving framework the project team is reviewing local and regional plans, collecting relevant data, and conducting preliminary analyses to inventory existing conditions. Additionally, WCA staff is reviewing options to host the final plan online in a digital format for greater public dissemination. The WCA, in collaboration with UCLA's Luskin Center for Innovation, hosted a successful joint community outreach workshop on August 18<sup>th</sup> introducing the Urban Greening Plan and through a mapping activity collected community input.





Staff continues to build contacts and relationships to form a Technical Advisory Committee to direct the project and planned initiatives moving forward. Having provided updates to the Gateway Council of Governments Board of Directors, City Managers and to City Planning Directors, as well as, to the Gateway Water Management Authority Board. This collaboration is part of a larger effort to work with both municipalities, government entities, NGO’s and interested parties active in the Gateway Cities and adjacent region.

The goals and objectives of the plan are depicted graphically the basics for matching grey to green projects with greening tools and with funding opportunities to depict environmental conditions, data sources, and online tools. An open data supported

plan can lead to the establishment of a region-wide planning information tool that is consistent with the larger watershed and greater LA region.

**Mount Baldy Wilderness Preserve:** As a final component of the Mount Baldy Wilderness Preserve Acquisition, Max Evangelista with Boy Scout Troop 403 (Claremont, CA) planned and implemented a service project on September 20, 2015 to install operational signage, including rule signs and cautions signs at two parking areas, and two ‘No Jumping Off Bridge’ signs at the Barrett-Stoddard Road crossing of San Antonio Creek. The service project was completed as Max’s Eagle Scout Service Project. Rule signs indicate the property boundaries, and identifies the WCA as the property owner and land manager. Warning signs include flash flooding and rock slide advisories.



**San Gabriel River Confluence with Cattle Canyon Project:** The Cattle Canyon Project seeks to address unsustainable recreation practices, which includes 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.

The current Phase 1 of Cattle Canyon Project includes both 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 planning study, includes a comprehensive site assessment and conceptual planning process that has identified opportunities for physical improvements, as well as to a lesser extent, management considerations that will improve site conditions.

On June 12th the planning and design consultants, BlueGreen Consulting, presented three schematic design options layouts that depict a range of feasible opportunities to address sustainable

recreation at the project site. Based on comments from the advisory committee, as well as target stakeholder outreach, the concepts presented within these alternatives will be refined into a preferred conceptual site development plan and final concept planning report.

Throughout July the Cattle Canyon Advisory Committee, which includes members of the Angeles National Forest (ANF), regulatory agencies, and environmental and environmental justice non-profit organizations, had the opportunity to provide comments regarding the three schematic design options layouts. WCA, ANF, and the design consultants are now in the process of developing a preferred consultant site development plan, slated to be completed this fall. Once developed the design plan will undergo a joint CEQA/NEPA review process, which will include a public comment period.

**South Gate Habitat Restoration Project/Parque dos Rios:** North East Trees, as the architect of record, has completed updates to the permit package addressing comments received from City and easement holders. The updated plans have been resubmitted to the permit entities for approvals.

LACFCD and City of South Gate are in agreement to provide water service via a new meter along Imperial Highway and pipe connection under Imperial Highway Bridge utilizing already in place connection points. ACOE will need to approve the water line routing as it is located within the LA River Channel infrastructure. Application for water meter has been made to the City of South Gate. Fee for new meter and to install system is being calculated by the City.

**Walnut Creek Habitat & Open Space:** Acquired in 2008, the Walnut Creek Habitat and Open Space Property is a total of approx. 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.

After completing a conceptual development plan for the site in coordination with the City of San Dimas, the City secured County Proposition A funding in the amount of \$850,000 to begin Phase 1 development including trail development and public access. The City and WCA are continuing to collaborate through the CEQA review and documentation process, and in planning for the development of Phase 1.

A Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Deceleration (MND) document was prepared and circulated for public review from May 12th to June 10th of 2015. During this review agency and public comments relative to environmental and non-environmental topics were collected; many comments were from local residences that were concerned with potential impacts of the project. In light of these voiced concerns the WCA, as CEQA lead agency, is working with the City staff to study modifications to the conceptual development plan before proceed with a Final MND. In addition to internal studies the WCA and City staff are also meeting with an organized group of local residences to listen to and consider their recommendation.

It is anticipated that the WCA and City will prepare one or more proposals to modify the conceptual development plan. These will be presented at a community workshop for further comments before any action is taken to complete the CEQA process or begin Phase 1 development.

**SAN GABRIEL RIVER DISCOVERY CENTER AUTHORITY**

San Gabriel River Discovery Center: The SGRDCA Design Team is completing the Construction Documents for the first phase of the construction. With the near completion of the CDs staff is working with the architects to establish Red Team meeting of permitting agencies throughout the County of Los Angeles, utility agencies and Army Corps of Engineers. At the board meeting held September 16, 2015, the board heard an update on the EcoVoices program and preparation for National Public Lands Day activity held on September 27, 2015 at El Pueblo in downtown Los Angeles.

**LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS AUTHORITY**

The LCWA hired Moffatt & Nichol to complete the restoration feasibility study for the entire Los Cerritos Wetlands and the LCWA Board adopted the Final Conceptual Restoration Plan (CRP) at their August 12, 2015 Board Meeting. The Final CRP has developed several alternatives that will be further analyzed for the development of a preferred alternative through the CEQA/NEPA process. 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

**July- December 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

**Upcoming Public Events**

**Wetlands Habitat Restorations:**  
LCW Land Trust & Aquarium of the Pacific sponsor Los Cerritos Wetlands restoration and maintenance events  
**10:30am-12:30pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday** of each month  
**Upcoming dates: Sat. Aug 1<sup>st</sup>, Sept 5<sup>th</sup>, Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>, Nov 7<sup>th</sup>, Dec 5<sup>th</sup>**  
Participants are eligible to win a free ticket to the Aquarium of the Pacific and other prizes!

**Guided Nature Walks:**  
LCW Land Trust sponsors monthly Land Tours  
**8:00 am – 10:00am on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday** of each month.  
Contact [ejlambe@lcwlandtrust.org](mailto:ejlambe@lcwlandtrust.org) for tour details.  
**Upcoming dates: Sat. Aug 1<sup>st</sup>, Sept 5<sup>th</sup>, Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>, Nov 7<sup>th</sup>, Dec 5<sup>th</sup>**

**El Dorado Audubon Bird Walks:**  
El Dorado Audubon sponsors a monthly Bird Walk at Los Cerritos  
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.  
**Upcoming dates: Sat. July 11<sup>th</sup>, Aug 8<sup>th</sup>, Sept 12<sup>th</sup>, Oct 10<sup>th</sup>, Nov 14<sup>th</sup>, Dec 12<sup>th</sup>**

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

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.**

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:**











