

**DATE:** October 15, 2018

**TO:** RMC Governing Board

**FROM:** Mark Stanley, Executive Officer

**SUBJECT:** Item 12: Consideration of a resolution allowing RMC to provide a grant to the Watershed Conservation Authority for the continued implementation of the River Ranger Program Study (Assembly Bill 1558- River Ranger Program RMC 17022)

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**PROGRAM AREA:** All

**PROJECT TYPE:** Development

**JURISDICTION:** Unincorporated County of Los Angeles

**PROJECT MANAGER:** Marybeth Vergara

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the RMC Board approve a grant to the Watershed Conservation Authority for the continued implementation of Assembly Bill 1558, introduced by Assemblymember Cristina Garcia- AD 58, also known as the River Ranger Bill (Chapter 452, Statutes of 2017).

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The recommendation is for the RMC to issue a grant to the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) for professional project management services and oversight of the River Ranger Program Study. The program's Phase 1 planning and design study was completed on June 30, 2018, and the results were submitted to the Assembly and Senate Natural Resources Committees. Phase 1 of the River Ranger Program Study was jointly led by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) and the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) with support from each of their JPAs, including the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) and the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA). Phase 2 program design and implementation is scheduled to begin in October and will primarily focus on governance and identifying sustainable funding sources for the Project implementation or a Pilot Program. Phase 2 efforts will continue to be led by the Conservancies and their JPAs, including the WCA to complete the study and produce an implementable plan by March 30, 2019. This grant will allow the WCA to enter into a contract with Placeworks, who conducted Phase 1 of the work with oversight from the RMC and MRCA. Other qualified consultants, sub-consultants, and non-profit organizations will also be brought on for completion of Phase 2 of the River Ranger Program Study, in coordination with both Conservancies. \$250,000 is available for Phase 2 of the River Ranger Study through the RMC.

Phase 1 began in early 2018 and included public outreach and stakeholder engagement, a program and services inventory, background research and case studies, program description and framework to meet the intent of AB1558. The Stakeholder committee included representatives of the cities that are along the 51-mile corridor of the LA River and some tributaries (23 cities), public safety representatives, CA conservation Corps, LA County Public Works, and several non-profit organizations who work along the LA River. See the attached Fact Sheets community input survey that were part of the information collected at various community events during Phase 1. (Exhibit A- Fact Sheets & Survey)

Phase 2 will include ongoing outreach, completion of the Plan and pilot program development. There will also be a more thorough discussion of potential models for the governing and financing of a long-term sustainable River Ranger Program, ideas for the pilot program, and strategic coordination for the work with the non-governmental organizations (NGOs). There was also a legislative action that was introduced by Senator Anthony Portantino (25<sup>th</sup> SD- La Cañada) SB 1126 which included a request for an extension for the River Ranger Program to extend the original deadline from June 30, 2018 to March 20, 2019. This action also included the Arroyo Seco as part of the study area for the program, among several other items. This item was signed by Governor Brown on Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018, which will allow the program to enter Phase 2 for completion by March 30, 2019.

**BACKGROUND:** The RMC and the SMMC have established an agreement to implement Assembly Bill 1558 (AB 1558), also known as the River Ranger Bill introduced by Assemblymember Cristina Garcia (AD 58) and approved by Governor Brown in 2017 (see Exhibit B- Legislation). Senate Bill 1126 (SB 1126) introduced by State Senator Anthony J. Portantino and approved by Governor Brown on September 28, 2018 extends the time frame of AB1448 to March 30, 2019 (see Exhibit C). The River Ranger Bill requires extensive coordination between the Conservancies to work together on implementation, planning, design and delivery of the AB 1558 River Ranger Program Study including funding. The bill also requires both Conservancies to collaborate with the Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Conservation Corps, and the State Lands Commission to develop a river ranger program to provide a network of river rangers who assist the public at sites along the entire 51 mile Los Angeles River and its tributaries, as prescribed. The RMC and SMMC had agreed to enter into an agreement to fund the design and implementation of this program with a \$500,000 grant using Proposition 1 grant funds allocated to each Conservancy. The grant in the amount of \$500,000 will be split evenly between the two Conservancies for project planning and design of the AB 1558 River Ranger Program in accordance with the Agreement (RMC Resolution 2018-04).

The goals of the River Ranger program are identified in AB 1558 as follows:

1. Establish an identity for the LA River as a place for its communities to enjoy recreational opportunities and learn about the River's history and environmental resources
2. Improve public safety for visitors to the Los Angeles River.
3. Foster collaboration among state and local government entities and other public agencies with jurisdiction over the LA River, and coordinate the work of these entities and public agencies with regard to the development, maintenance, and enhancement of the river and its resources.
4. Protect the parks, open space, and other public spaces adjacent to the Los Angeles River.
5. Engage communities along the Los Angeles River in the protection and preservation of the Los Angeles River and its resources.
6. Promote equal access and equity among all communities along the Los Angeles River with regards to the development and placement of improvements along the River.
7. Monitor the physical conditions, environmental health, and development of green space along the Los Angeles River.
8. Provide a system for coordinating the work of river rangers with programs and services offered by local governments and conservation corps.
9. Incorporate the findings and principles expressed in the "Presidential Memorandum— Promoting Diversity and Inclusion in Our National Parks, National Forests, and Other Public Lands and Waters," dated January 12, 2017.

The Conservancies are required according to SB1126 to submit a copy of the plan to the Assembly Committee on Water, Parks and Wildlife and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water, in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code no later than March 30, 2019. With such a short timeline, both Conservancies are working to establishing the agreements and funding necessary to carry out the goals of this legislation. This includes using the Joint Powers Authority JPA for the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA). This contract will allow the RMC to provide \$250,000 of its funding from Proposition 1 to this planning process.

An Advisory Committee for the design and implementation of the River Ranger Program include representation from the following:

- San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC)
- Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC)
- State of California Department of Parks and Recreation
- LA County Department of Public Works LACDPW
- Office of Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia (AD 58)
- Office of Speaker Anthony Rendon (AD 63)
- Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA)
- California Conservation Corps (CCC)
- Cities representing the Lower LA River (15 cities)
- Cities representing the Upper LA River (3-4)
- Local Conservation Corps: Long Beach Conservation Corps (LBCC)
- Los Angeles Conservation Corps (LACC)

Phase 2 will continue to include extensive community outreach to ensure participation from community members along the entire 51 mile stretch of the LA River. Management of the consultants by WCA will be done in coordination with the RMC, SMMC and MRCA, and in coordination with the Advisory Group indicated above. The SMMC approved of a similar action to fund the development of a plan for the design and implementation of the River Ranger Program (AB 1558) at its Board meeting on December 11, 2017 (SMMC Board Meeting, Item 25, Resolution #17-81).

**FISCAL INFORMATION:** Should this resolution be approved authorizing a grant of Proposition 1 funds to implement Assembly Bill 1558, also known as the River Ranger Bill proposed by Assemblymember Garcia, AD-58 (Chapter 4521, Statutes of 2017), the fiscal impact to the RMC will be a total of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000). This amount will be matched by an additional \$250,000 provided by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, for a total grant of \$500,000.

In 2017, the State of California legislature appropriated Proposition 1 (water bond) Urban Creeks funding to both the RMC and the SMMC totaling one hundred million dollars (\$100,000,000), resulting in fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000) each. A component of the appropriation is a thirteen million dollar (\$13,000,000) set aside for planning and implementation of projects approved jointly by both Conservancies. The proposed grant is to be funded from these joint funds.

Funding for these projects will be allocated from the following sections of Proposition 1, under statute:

Section 79735 (a) of the funds authorized by Section 79730, one hundred million dollars (\$100,000,000) shall be available, upon appropriation by the Legislature, for projects to protect and enhance an urban creek, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 7048, and its tributaries pursuant to Division 22.8 (commencing with Section 79508....

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY AND RMC ADOPTED POLICIES/AUTHORITIES:** The Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) statute provides in part that:

Section 32602: There is in the Resources Agency, the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, which is created as a state agency for the following purposes:

- (a) To acquire and manage public lands within the Lower Los Angeles River and San Gabriel River watersheds, and to provide open-space, low-impact recreational and educational uses, water conservation, watershed improvement, wildlife and habitat restoration and protection, and watershed improvement within the territory.
- (b) To preserve the San Gabriel River and the Lower Los Angeles River consistent with existing and adopted river and flood control projects for the protection of life and property.
- (c) To acquire open-space lands within the territory of the conservancy.

Section 32604: The conservancy shall do all of the following:

- (a) Establish policies and priorities for the conservancy regarding the San Gabriel River and the Lower Los Angeles River, and their watersheds, and conduct any necessary planning activities, in accordance with the purposes set forth in Section 32602.
- (b) Approve conservancy funded projects that advance the policies and priorities set forth in Section 32602.
- (d) To provide for the public's enjoyment and enhancement of recreational and educational experiences on public lands in the San Gabriel Watershed and Lower Los Angeles River, and the San Gabriel Mountains in a manner consistent with the protection of lands and resources in those watersheds.

Section 32614: The conservancy may do all the following:

- (b) Enter into contracts with any public agency, private entity, or person necessary for the proper discharge of the conservancy's duties, and enter into a joint powers agreement with a public agency, in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Section 32602.
- (e) Enter into any other agreement with any public agency, private entity, or person necessary for the proper discharge of the conservancy's duties for the purposes set forth in Section 32602.
- (f) Recruit and coordinate volunteers and experts to conduct interpretive and recreational programs and assist with construction projects and the maintenance of parkway facilities.

Further, Section 32614 provides that: The conservancy may do all the following:

- (g) Undertake, within the territory, site improvement projects, regulate public access, and revegetate and otherwise rehabilitate degraded areas, in consultation with any other public agency with appropriate jurisdiction and expertise, in accordance with the purposes set forth in Section 32602. The conservancy may also, within the territory, upgrade deteriorating facilities and construct new facilities as needed for outdoor recreation, nature appreciation and interpretation, and natural resources projection. The conservancy may undertake those projects by itself or in conjunction with another local agency; however, the conservancy shall provide overall coordination of those projects by setting priorities for the projects and by ensuring a uniform approach to projects. The conservancy may undertake those projects with prior notification to the legislative body of the local agency

that has jurisdiction in the area in which the conservancy proposes to undertake that activity.

Section 32614.5:

- (a) The conservancy may award grants to local public agencies, state agencies, federal agencies, and nonprofit organizations for the purposes of this division.
- (b) Grants to nonprofit organizations for the acquisition of real property or interests in real property shall be subject to all the following conditions:
  - (1) The purchase price of any interest in land acquired by the nonprofit organization may not exceed fair market value as established by an appraisal approved by the conservancy.
  - (2) The conservancy approves the terms under which the interest in land is acquired.
  - (3) The interest in land acquired pursuant to a grant from the conservancy may not be used as security for any debt incurred by the nonprofit organization unless the conservancy approves the transaction.
  - (4) The transfer of land acquired pursuant to a grant shall be subject to the approval of the conservancy and the execution of an agreement between the conservancy and the transferee sufficient to protect the interests of the state.
  - (5) The state shall have a right of entry and power of termination in and over all interests in real property acquired with state funds, which may be exercised if any essential term or condition of the grant is violated.
  - (6) If the existence of the nonprofit organization is terminated for any reason, title to all interest in real property acquired with state funds shall immediately vest in the state, except that, prior to that termination, another public agency or nonprofit organization may receive title to all or a portion of that interest in real property, by recording its acceptance of title, together with the conservancy's approval, in writing.
- (c) Any deed or other instrument of conveyance whereby real property is acquired by a nonprofit organization pursuant to this section shall be recorded and shall set forth the executor interest or right of entry on the part of the state.

RMC Resolution 2018-03 approved that the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing the RMC to establish and enter into an agreement with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for the implementation of Assembly Bill 1558, introduced by Assemblymember Cristina Garcia-AD 58, also known as the River Ranger Bill (Chapter 452, Statutes of 2017).

RMC Resolution 2018-04 approved that the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing the RMC to enter into an agreement with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for the implementation of Assembly Bill 1558, introduced by Assembly member Cristina Garcia- AD 58, also known as the River Ranger Bill (Chapter 452, Statutes of 2017). Entering into this agreement includes providing a grant in the amount of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) using the RMC's Proposition 1 grant funds. This amount will be matched by a grant from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) in the same amount for a total grant of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000).



# Envisioning a Program to Make the LA River Safer and More Inviting

## Why is the LA River Ranger Plan being developed?

As the Los Angeles River is embraced as a community resource, the need for public safety, education, and resource improvements are becoming more urgent.

**Assembly Bill 1558 Los Angeles River: River Ranger Program** requires development of a program to provide a network of river rangers who assist the public at sites along the Los Angeles River and its tributaries. The program is envisioned to:

- 🌀 Establish a Los Angeles River identity
- 🌀 Improve public safety for visitors
- 🌀 Foster collaboration among those with jurisdiction over the river
- 🌀 Protect parks, open space, and other public space
- 🌀 Engage communities in the protection and preservation of the River and its resources
- 🌀 Promote diversity and inclusion
- 🌀 Promote equal access and equity among all communities along the River with regard to the development and placement of improvements along the river
- 🌀 Monitor the physical conditions, environmental health, and development of green space along the River
- 🌀 Coordinate the work of river rangers with programs and services

## Who is leading the effort?

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC), the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) and their Joint Powers Authorities (JPAs).

## How will the Plan be developed?

Community and stakeholder input will inform the Program vision and components, and ensure that the program reflects community needs.

## What is the timeline for the River Ranger Plan?

### PHASE 1:

### March through June 2018

- Public Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement
- Program and Services Inventory
- Background Research and Case Studies
- Program Description and Framework to meet intent of AB1558

### PHASE 2:

### July 2018 to Spring 2019

- Ongoing Outreach
- Plan and Pilot Program Development

**Share  
Your  
Thoughts!**

## Complete the LA River Ranger Outreach Survey:

[www.surveymonkey.com/r/LARiverRangerOutreach](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LARiverRangerOutreach)



Your input will help determine program components and priorities.

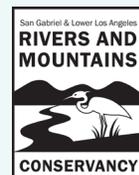
**Thank you!**

For comments and questions, please contact:

Marybeth Vergara, RMC at [mvergara@rmc.ca.gov](mailto:mvergara@rmc.ca.gov)

- or -

[info@smmc.ca.gov](mailto:info@smmc.ca.gov)





# Ideando un Programa para hacer al Río Los Angeles Más Seguro y Atractivo

## ¿Por qué desarrollar el plan de Guardaparques para el Río Los Angeles?

A medida que el Río Los Angeles se convierte en un recurso comunitario se vuelve más urgente y necesario contar con seguridad pública, educación y mejores recursos.

**El Proyecto de Ley 1558 de la Asamblea del Estado: Programa de Guardaparques para el Río Los Angeles** requiere desarrollar un programa que provéa una red de guardaparques para asistir al público a lo largo del Río Los Angeles y sus tributarios. El programa tiene como fin:

-  Crear la identidad del Río Los Angeles
-  Mejorar la seguridad pública del área
-  Fomentar colaboración entre las agencias con jurisdicción sobre el río
-  Proteger parques, espacios abiertos y otros espacios públicos
-  Involucrar a la comunidad en la protección y preservación del río y sus recursos
-  Promover diversidad e inclusión
-  Promover el igual acceso y la equidad entre las comunidades aledañas al río con respecto al desarrollo, distribución y ubicación de los mejoramientos a lo largo del río
-  Monitorar las condiciones físicas, la salud del medio ambiente y la creación de áreas verdes a lo largo del río
-  Coordinar el trabajo de los guardaparques del río con programas y servicios

## ¿Quién lidera este esfuerzo?

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC), San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) y sus Autoridades de Poderes Conjuntos (JPAs por sus siglas en inglés).

## ¿Cómo se desarrollará el Plan?

La opinión de la comunidad y de partes interesadas informará la visión y componentes del Programa y asegurará que este refleje las necesidades de la comunidad.

## ¿Cuándo se llevará a cabo el Plan de Guardaparques del Río?

### FASE 1:

Marzo a Junio del 2018

- Difusión Pública e Involucrar a Partes Interesadas
- Inventario de Programas y Servicios
- Casos de Estudio e Investigacion de Antepasados
- Descripción del Programa y Marco para Cumplir el Propósito de AB1558

### FASE 2:

Julio del 2018 a primavera 2019

- La Difusión Continúa
- Desarrollo del Plan y Programa Piloto

¡Comparta  
su  
Opinión!

Participe por internet en nuestra encuesta de difusión:

[www.surveymonkey.com/r/EncuestaRioLA](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EncuestaRioLA)



Su opinión ayudará a determinar los componentes y prioridades del programa

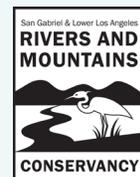
¡Muchas Gracias!

Para Preguntas y Comentarios, contacte a:

Marybeth Vergara de RMC a [mvergara@rmc.ca.gov](mailto:mvergara@rmc.ca.gov)

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[info@smmc.ca.gov](mailto:info@smmc.ca.gov)





# OUTREACH SURVEY

We need your input! The LA River Ranger Program is envisioned as a new program to make the LA River safer and more inviting.

By completing this survey, you are helping to ensure that the River Ranger Plan reflects your community's needs. Thank you for assisting!

This project is a joint effort between the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC), the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) and their Joint Powers Authorities (JPAs).

Please return this survey directly to the organization that provided it to you or send it to the Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority (570 West Avenue 26, Suite 100, Los Angeles, CA 90065) by May 15th.

If you would prefer to complete the survey online, please go to: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/LARiverRangerOutreach](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LARiverRangerOutreach)

## 1. What would you like to see as part of the role of a "River Ranger"?

	Is not an important role for a River Ranger	Is somewhat of an important role for a River Ranger	Is an extremely important role for a River Ranger
Safety presence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Undergo maintenance and operations (facilities, graffiti removal, trail maintenance, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve access/connectivity/signage to the river	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Care for natural resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide programs for recreation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide programs for environmental education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Peace officer, law enforcement, other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How else would a River Ranger best serve your community?

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## 2. What Los Angeles River topics would you like to know more about? (choose all that apply)

- Opportunities for recreation
- Trail access points
- Cultural History
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- Natural history (birds, plants, water, etc.)
- Guidelines for safety
- Water issues (flood control, water quality, etc.)

**3. Do you have any safety concerns when visiting the River? (choose all that apply)**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No, I feel safe when visiting the River | <input type="checkbox"/> Crime   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of adequate lighting               | <input type="checkbox"/> Pollution/water quality   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trash/debris                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of maintenance of parks, trails and facilities (restrooms, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):                 |  |
- 

**4. How often do you visit the Los Angeles River?**

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have never visited | <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a year | <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple times a month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once a year or less  | <input type="checkbox"/> Once a month       | <input type="checkbox"/> Once a week or more    |

**5. What do you do at the Los Angeles River? (choose all that apply)**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bike                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Kayak          | <input type="checkbox"/> Picnic               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walk                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoy the view | <input type="checkbox"/> Watch birds/wildlife |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ride a horse            | <input type="checkbox"/> Visit a park   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): | _____                                   |   |

**6. What language(s) would you like to see represented on the River? (i.e. spoken by staff, signage, etc.)**

- |                                  |                                     |  |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> English | <input type="checkbox"/> Korean     | <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish | <input type="checkbox"/> Armenian   | <input type="checkbox"/> Russian                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tagalog | <input type="checkbox"/> Farsi      | _____  |

**7. Where do you live? (optional)** City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

**8. What age category best describes you?**

- |                                   |                                |                                |                              |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65+ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18-24    | <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 |                              |

**9. Would you be interested in future employment or volunteer opportunities?**

- Yes, I would be interested in future employment opportunities
- Yes, I would be interested in future volunteer opportunities
- No, I am not interested

If yes, or for project updates, please provide your name and email address (optional):

\_\_\_\_\_

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Date Published: 10/04/2017 02:00 PM

**Assembly Bill No. 1558**

## CHAPTER 452

An act relating to rivers.

[ Approved by Governor October 03, 2017. Filed with Secretary of State  
October 03, 2017. ]

## LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1558, Cristina Garcia. Los Angeles River: river ranger program.

Existing law establishes the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (the conservancies) and prescribes the membership and functions and duties of the conservancies with regard to the protection, preservation, and development of certain lands along the San Gabriel and Los Angeles Rivers and surrounding areas.

This bill would require the conservancies to collaborate with the Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Conservation Corps, and the State Lands Commission to develop a river ranger program to provide a network of river rangers who assist the public at sites along the Los Angeles River and its tributaries, as prescribed. The bill would require the conservancies, no later than June 30, 2018, to develop a plan for the design and implementation of the program, containing specified components and information, and to provide a copy of the completed plan to certain legislative committees by that date.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

## THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

**SECTION 1.** The Legislature finds and declares as follows:

(a) Since the 1940s, the County of Los Angeles has managed the Los Angeles River as a concrete flood channel. The communities through which the river passes have had limited contact with or responsibility for the river.

(b) In the last several decades, the Los Angeles River has received greater public attention and support for its restoration and availability as an environmental and recreational resource for the communities through which the river passes, and Congress recently approved a restoration plan for an 11-mile segment of the river near Dodger Stadium in the City of Los Angeles. The Legislature has appropriated funds to pay some of the costs of the Los Angeles River restoration, including an amount of one hundred million dollars (\$100,000,000), which has been authorized under a recently enacted bond measure to benefit the river.

(c) Some communities have parks along the Los Angeles River, and bicyclists traverse the bike paths on the river's levees every day. The City of South Gate has shifted its policy to direct community attention to the benefits of the Los Angeles River.

(d) The Lower Los Angeles River Working Group is currently developing a plan for revitalizing the river downstream from the City of Los Angeles, and is considering ways to encourage communities to engage with the river and make the river a welcoming place for the communities through which it passes. The working group has also considered the possibility of placing "river rangers," similar to National Park Service Rangers, to increase public safety and provide resource interpretation services for visitors to the river.

**SEC. 2.** (a) For purposes of this section, "conservancies" means the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

(b) The conservancies shall collaborate with the Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Conservation Corps, and the State Lands Commission to develop a river ranger program to provide a network of river rangers who provide assistance to the public at sites along the Los Angeles River and its tributaries. The conservancies shall solicit the participation of representatives of local governments that have jurisdiction over segments of the river, including the City of Los Angeles and the County of Los Angeles. The conservancies, in cooperation with the Lower Los Angeles River Working Group, no later than June 30, 2018, shall prepare a plan for the design and implementation of the program, including recommendations regarding ways to finance the establishment and ongoing implementation of the program, and shall ensure that the plan is developed to accomplish all of the following objectives:

(1) Establish an identity for the Los Angeles River as a place for its communities to enjoy recreational opportunities and learn about the river's history and environmental resources.

(2) Improve public safety for visitors to the Los Angeles River.

(3) Foster collaboration among state and local government entities and other public agencies with jurisdiction over the Los Angeles River, and coordinate the work of these entities and public agencies with regard to the development, maintenance, and enhancement of the river and its resources.

(4) Protect the parks, open space, and other public places adjacent to the Los Angeles River.

(5) Engage communities along the Los Angeles River in the protection and preservation of the Los Angeles River and its resources.

(6) Promote equal access and equity among all communities along the Los Angeles River with regard to the development and placement of improvements along the river.

(7) Monitor the physical conditions, environmental health, and development of green space along the Los Angeles River.

(8) Provide a system for coordinating the work of river rangers with programs and services offered by local governments and conservation corps.

(9) Incorporate the findings and principles expressed in the "Presidential Memorandum--Promoting Diversity and Inclusion in Our National Parks, National Forests, and Other Public Lands and Waters," dated January 12, 2017.

(c) No later than June 30, 2018, the conservancies shall submit a copy of the plan required to be prepared pursuant to subdivision (b) to the Assembly Committee on Water, Parks, and Wildlife and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water, in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.

(d) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2019, and as of that date is repealed.


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**SB-1126 Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Working Group: river ranger program.** (2017-2018)

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Date Published: 09/28/2018 09:00 PM

**Senate Bill No. 1126**

CHAPTER 895

An act to amend Section 33220 of the Public Resources Code, and to amend Section 2 of Chapter 452 of the Statutes of 2017, relating to the Los Angeles River and tributaries, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

[ Approved by Governor September 28, 2018. Filed with Secretary of State September 28, 2018. ]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1126, Portantino. Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Working Group: river ranger program.

Existing law provides for the protection, enhancement, and restoration of rivers in this state. Existing law establishes the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and prescribes the membership, functions, and duties of the conservancy with regard to the acquisition, preservation, and improvement of real property within the Santa Monica Mountains zone, as defined. Existing law establishes within the conservancy the Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Working Group and requires, by March 1, 2019, the working group to develop, through watershed-based planning methods and community engagement, a revitalization plan for the Upper Los Angeles River, the tributaries of the Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, and Verdugo Wash, and any additional tributary waterway that the working group determines to be necessary. Existing law requires the revitalization plan to address the unique and diverse needs of the Upper Los Angeles River, Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, and Verdugo Wash, and the communities through which they pass, and to include watershed education programs.

This bill would specify the Arroyo Seco as a waterway for the working group to include in the revitalization plan and watershed education programs. The bill would authorize the working group to include representatives from the Cities of La Cañada Flintridge, Pasadena, and South Pasadena. The bill would authorize a representative appointed to the working group to designate an alternate in his or her place. The bill would instead require the revitalization plan to be developed on or before June 30, 2020, and the conservancy to provide a copy of the plan to certain legislative committees by that date.

Existing law requires the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to collaborate with the Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Conservation Corps, and the State Lands Commission to develop a river ranger program, as prescribed. Existing law requires the conservancies, no later than June 30, 2018, to develop a plan for the design and implementation of the program and to provide a copy of the plan to certain legislative committees by that date.

This bill would instead require the plan to be developed and a copy to be provided to the legislative committees by March 30, 2019.

This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Vote: 2/3 Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

## THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

**SECTION 1.** Section 33220 of the Public Resources Code is amended to read:

**33220.** (a) There shall be within the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy an Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Working Group. The Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency, in consultation with the conservancy, and, to the extent that they wish to consult, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the City of Los Angeles, shall consider requests from local agency representatives to participate in the working group and may appoint no more than 23 representatives to the working group. A representative appointed to the working group may designate an alternate in his or her place. The working group may include, but need not be limited to, representatives from the conservancy, the County of Los Angeles, the Cities of Burbank, Glendale, La Cañada Flintridge, Los Angeles, Pasadena, San Fernando, and South Pasadena, elected officials of the cities riparian to the Pacoima Wash and Tujunga Wash, and nonprofit organizations serving the Upper Los Angeles River, San Fernando Valley, Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, and Verdugo Wash.

(b) On or before June 30, 2020, the working group shall develop, through watershed-based planning methods and community engagement, a revitalization plan for the Upper Los Angeles River, the tributaries of the Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, and Verdugo Wash, the Arroyo Seco, and any additional tributary waterway that the working group determines to be necessary. The revitalization plan shall address the unique and diverse needs of the Upper Los Angeles River, Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, Verdugo Wash, and Arroyo Seco, and the communities through which they pass. The plan shall be consistent with and enhance, and may be incorporated into plans that include, but are not limited to, the County of Los Angeles' Master Plan. The plan shall include watershed education programs that help the Upper Los Angeles River, Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, Verdugo Wash, and Arroyo Seco communities recognize the value of the waterways and the importance of protecting the river's watershed resources and its vitality to their communities. The revitalization plan shall require a master planning process that includes community engagement and a prioritization of disadvantaged communities, identified pursuant to Section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code.

(c) The conservancy shall provide any necessary staffing to the working group to assist in the development of the plan.

(d) The development and implementation of the revitalization plan may be eligible for funding from any public or private source, including, but not limited to, funding available pursuant to Section 79735 of the Water Code. Entities that are eligible to implement the revitalization plan include, but are not limited to, state agencies, local agencies, and nonprofit organizations, and may be eligible for state funding. An entity receiving funding to implement the revitalization plan shall submit progress reports to the conservancy that include the status of funding.

(e) The working group shall submit the revitalization plan to the conservancy for approval. Upon adoption by the conservancy, the revitalization plan shall be considered an amendment to the Watershed and Open Space Plan for the San Gabriel and Los Angeles Rivers. To the extent that the city or county wishes to consider the revitalization plan, the conservancy shall submit the plan for adoption to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors for inclusion in the Master Plan of the County of Los Angeles and to the Los Angeles City Council for inclusion into the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan.

(f) No later than June 30, 2020, the conservancy shall submit a copy of the plan to the Assembly Committee on Water, Parks, and Wildlife and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water.

**SEC. 2.** Section 2 of Chapter 452 of the Statutes of 2017 is amended to read:

**Sec. 2.** (a) For purposes of this section, "conservancies" means the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

(b) The conservancies shall collaborate with the Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Conservation Corps, and the State Lands Commission to develop a river ranger program to provide a network of river rangers who provide assistance to the public at sites along the Los Angeles River and its tributaries. The conservancies shall solicit the participation of representatives of local governments that have jurisdiction over segments of the river, including the City of Los Angeles and the County of Los Angeles. The conservancies, in cooperation with the Lower Los Angeles River Working Group, no later than March 30, 2019, shall prepare a plan for the design and implementation of the program, including recommendations regarding ways to finance the establishment and ongoing implementation of the program, and shall ensure that the plan is developed to accomplish all of the following objectives:

- (1) Establish an identity for the Los Angeles River as a place for its communities to enjoy recreational opportunities and learn about the river's history and environmental resources.
  - (2) Improve public safety for visitors to the Los Angeles River.
  - (3) Foster collaboration among state and local government entities and other public agencies with jurisdiction over the Los Angeles River, and coordinate the work of these entities and public agencies with regard to the development, maintenance, and enhancement of the river and its resources.
  - (4) Protect the parks, open space, and other public places adjacent to the Los Angeles River.
  - (5) Engage communities along the Los Angeles River in the protection and preservation of the Los Angeles River and its resources.
  - (6) Promote equal access and equity among all communities along the Los Angeles River with regard to the development and placement of improvements along the river.
  - (7) Monitor the physical conditions, environmental health, and development of green space along the Los Angeles River.
  - (8) Provide a system for coordinating the work of river rangers with programs and services offered by local governments and conservation corps.
  - (9) Incorporate the findings and principles expressed in the "Presidential Memorandum--Promoting Diversity and Inclusion in Our National Parks, National Forests, and Other Public Lands and Waters," dated January 12, 2017.
- (c) No later than March 30, 2019, the conservancies shall submit a copy of the plan required to be prepared pursuant to subdivision (b) to the Assembly Committee on Water, Parks, and Wildlife and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water, in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.
- (d) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2020, and as of that date is repealed.

**SEC. 3.** This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the California Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

In order to protect the Los Angeles River watershed's resources and its vitality to the community, it is necessary that this act take effect immediately.

October 15, 2018 – Item 12

RESOLUTION 2018-23

RESOLUTION OF THE SAN GABRIEL AND LOWER LOS ANGELES  
RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY (RMC) AUTHORIZING  
THE RMC TO CONTRACT WITH THE WATERSHED  
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY FOR THE LA RIVER RANGER  
PROGRAM STUDY

WHEREAS, The legislature has found and declared that the San Gabriel River and its tributaries, the Lower Los Angeles River and its tributaries, and the San Gabriel Mountains, Puente Hills, and San Jose Hills constitute a unique and important open space, environmental, anthropological, cultural, scientific, educational, recreational, scenic, and wildlife resource that should be held in trust to be preserved and enhanced for the enjoyment of, and appreciation by, present and future generations; and

WHEREAS, The people of the State of California have enacted the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (“Proposition 1”) and

WHEREAS, the State of California has authorized an expenditure of funds from Proposition 1, the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 to the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy for capital outlay and local assistance multi-benefit grants for ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration projects; and

WHEREAS, The San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy have been directed to cooperatively develop a River Ranger program; and

WHEREAS, The RMC may award grants to local public agencies, state agencies, federal agencies, and nonprofit organizations for the purposes of Division 22.8 the Public Resources Code; and

WHEREAS, The proposed project meets an objective of the California Water Action Plan for more reliable water supplies, restoration of important species and habitat, more resilient and sustainably managed water infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, The proposed project meets the goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions consistent with AB 32; and

WHEREAS, The proposed project is consistent with the San Gabriel and Los Angeles River Watershed and Open Space Plan; and

WHEREAS, The proposed project protects land and water resources; and

This action is exempt from the environmental impact report requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and NOW

*Therefore be it resolved that the RMC hereby:*

- 1 FINDS that this action is consistent with the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy Act and is necessary to carry out the purposes and objectives of Division 22.8 of the Public Resources Code.

RESOLUTION 2018-23

- 2 FINDS that the Proposition 1 RMC Grant Program is consistent with the Water Quality,
- 3 Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (“Proposition 1”), which provides funds for the RMC grant program.
- 4 FINDS the proposed project meets at least one of the purposes of Proposition 1.
- 5 FINDS the proposed project meets at least one of the three objectives of the California Water Action Plan.
- 6 FINDS that the proposed action is consistent with the San Gabriel and Lower San Gabriel and Los Angeles River Watershed and Open Space Plan as adopted by the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy;
- 7 FINDS that the actions contemplated by this resolution are exempt from the environmental impact report requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act.
- 8 ADOPTS the staff report and recommendation dated October 15, 2018.
- 9 AUTHORIZES the Executive Officer to execute the agreement and to perform any and all acts necessary to carry out this resolution, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, such authority shall include those provisions that he shall determine in the exclusive exercise of his discretion are necessary to carry out the purposes of this resolution and to comply with the policies and mission of the Conservancy, and to otherwise carry out the provisions of state law and regulations.

~ End of Resolution ~

Passed and Adopted by the Board of the  
SAN GABRIEL AND LOWER LOS ANGELES RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS  
CONSERVANCY on October 15, 2018.

Motion \_\_\_\_\_ Second: \_\_\_\_\_

Ayes: \_\_\_\_\_ Nays: \_\_\_\_\_ Abstentions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Frank Colonna, Chair

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
David Edsall, Jr.  
Deputy Attorney General