

Arroyo Seco Named California Pilot Watershed

August 9, 2001

The California Resources Agency and the State Water Resources Control Board have selected the Arroyo Seco Watershed Restoration Feasibility Study as a Pilot Project under AB 2117 (the Wayne Watershed Bill). Ten watershed projects will be studied over the next six months and a report prepared for submittal to the California Legislature by February 1, 2002 as part of the Joint Task Force for California Watershed Management.

The selection was announced in a July 27, 2001 letter from Mary Nichols, Secretary of the Resources Agency, and Arthur Baggett, Chair of the State Water Resources Control Board. The study will provide the California Legislature with a report on the state of California's watersheds. The Arroyo Seco was selected to demonstrate one of the various ways in which watershed management is accomplished in California. The study will document lessons learned from the 10 watershed projects that have been selected and make recommendations regarding state support for watershed efforts.

The Arroyo Seco and the Santa Ana River are the two Southern California watersheds selected for study. The other projects selected are Tomales Bay/Lagunitas Creek, Santa Clara Basin Watershed Management Initiative, Humboldt Bay Watershed Action Plan and Enhancement Program, Elkhorn Slough Watershed Permit Coordination Program, Yuba Watershed Collaborative Projects, Los Penasquitos Lagoon Enhancement Plan and Program, Clear Lake Basin Watershed Management Project, and Codornices Creek Watershed Restoration Action Plan.

What is the Arroyo Seco Watershed Restoration Feasibility Study?

The Arroyo Seco Watershed Restoration Feasibility Study is developing a comprehensive, long-term plan to restore the grand canyon that runs from the San Gabriel Mountains to the Los Angeles River through Pasadena, South Pasadena and Northeast Los Angeles.

Major elements of the \$400,000 study consider flood and stream management, habitat restoration, water resources and recreational opportunities. The watershed study, a partnership of North East Trees and the Arroyo Seco Foundation, is funded by the California Coastal Conservancy and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. There is also participation and technical review by twelve governmental agencies with management responsibilities in the Arroyo Seco, including the US Forest Service, the three cities the Arroyo runs through and Los Angeles County Department of Public Works.

The final report of the feasibility study will be issued in September, but preliminary recommendations have already been publicly discussed. Two additional rounds of funding from Prop 13 and the Calfed program have been obtained for further studies and activities.

You can find complete information about the project at this web address:

<http://www.arroyoseco.org/watershed.htm>

There is also an online powerpoint presentation at: <http://www.arroyoseco.org/AugustSlides.htm>

Sponsors

- North East Trees
- Arroyo Seco Foundation

Participating Agencies

- | | | | |
|----------------|--|-----------------|--|
| Federal | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ National Park Service▪ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers▪ U.S. Forest Service | Regional | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Metropolitan Water District of Southern California▪ Mountains and Recreation Conservation Authority |
| State | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ California Coastal Conservancy▪ California Department of Fish and Game▪ California Department of Transportation▪ Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy | Local | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Los Angeles County Department of Public Works▪ City of Los Angeles<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Public Works○ Parks & Recreation▪ City of Pasadena<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Public Works○ Water & Power▪ City of South Pasadena |

Pasadena employees have been involved from the very beginning. The Watershed Study was first announced at a workshop in March, 2000 at La Casita del Arroyo on "Restoring the Arroyo Stream." Cynthia Kurtz and Rosa Laveaga were featured speakers at that session. In April 2000 the project team held a briefing with City Manager Cynthia Kurtz and top city officials. Ms.

Kurtz pledged Pasadena's assistance. The monthly meetings of the Agency Technical Review committee have been attended by Bob Baderian, representing Pasadena Public Works, and Gary Takara, representing Pasadena Water & Power.

The two key flood management agencies, the US Army Corps of Engineers and the County Department of Public Works, are both taking the watershed very seriously. The Corps has authorized \$40,000 to review the contents of the Watershed Study this fiscal year (i.e. before October) and an additional \$100,000 next year. The Watershed Management Division of County Public Works has spent over \$200,000 in hydrology studies and technical assistance for the study. They intend to incorporate the Final Report into the Los Angeles River Master Plan.

Please let me know if you need any further information about the study.



News from North East Trees

Planting an urban forest and improving the communities of Northeast Los Angeles since 1990.

WINTER / SPRING 2001

Arroyo Seco Watershed Restoration Feasibility Study

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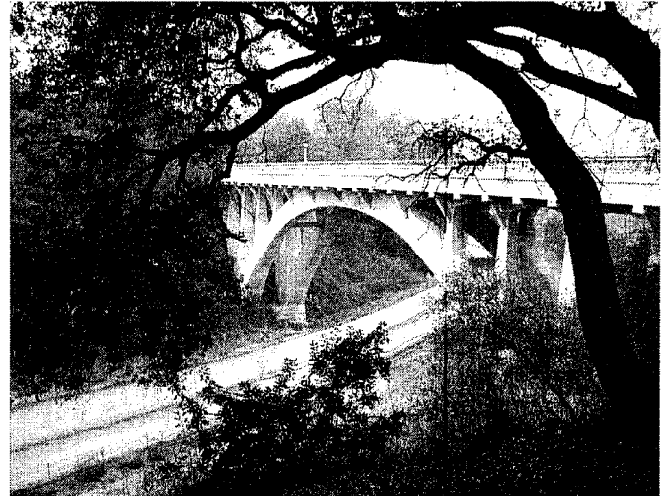
Project Updates

- Arroyo Seco/Los Angeles River Miniparks project, funded by Caltrans, will develop mini-parks & native plantings.
- Planting begins on the Children's Arboretum in Elysian Park. The project has been funded by Los Angeles County Prop "A".
- NET will enhance the linkage to the San Gabriel River equestrian & bike trails at Whittier Narrows Nature Center.
- Eagle Rock View Park, a project of SMMC/MRCA, opened in September.
- NET has been awarded a design contract for Confluence Park by SMMC/MRCA.
- The California Coastal Conservancy and the Los Angeles and San Gabriel River Watershed Council has funded a study to assess bikeway and greenway opportunities along the L.A. River near downtown.
- NET has been working with The Latino Urban Forum holding planning and design charettes to develop a mixed use and open space plan for Chinatown Yards aka Cornfields.
- NET spruces up Fletcher Drive near the River with river rock median islands, plantings and gateway by renowned local sculptor Brett Goldstone.

By Chuck Arnold and
Lynne Dwyer

The Arroyo Seco is one of the Los Angeles Rivers' main tributaries. Nearly half of the 60 sq. mile watershed lies within the Angeles National Forest. Its 22-mile stream flows through Pasadena, South Pasadena and Los Angeles to merge with the Los Angeles River near Elysian Park. Its watershed extends into parts of La Canada Flintridge and Altadena. Known for its scenic beauty and cultural significance, the Arroyo has long been honored as a special place. The natural verdant mountain stream gives way to sterile concrete as it travels south toward the confluence. Numerous barriers to wildlife reduce the ability of the Arroyo Seco to function as a healthy ecosystem.

North East Trees and the Arroyo Seco Foundation joined together to initiate the Arroyo Seco Watershed Restoration Feasibility Study focusing on environmental restoration. The study will research and develop a new



The Arroyo Seco as it winds under the San Rafael Bridge, Pasadena

environmental approach to watershed planning and make recommendations to the numerous agencies with management authority along the Arroyo. The study has been funded by the California Coastal Conservancy. Other contributors include the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy/ Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works-Watershed Management Division, National Park Service Rivers & Trails Conservation Assistance Program and various governmental agencies and community institutions.

The goal of the study is to integrate issues of stream restoration, flood management, water resources, habitat enhancement, and recreational opportunities. A multi-disciplinary team will conduct technical studies and prioritize recommended projects for implementation. The engineering firm of Montgomery Watson Harza will provide engineering, hydrology and fluvial geomor-

phology services. Based on a survey of existing data and the project's new technical studies, the team will develop design criteria and produce a comprehensive watershed plan.

An Agency Technical Review Committee and Stakeholder Committee have been organized to guide the process, provide technical assistance and foster inter-agency cooperation. North East Trees envisions that this study, once completed, will be integrated into the County's Los Angeles River Master Plan.

North East Trees is excited to be leading this unique effort. We have brought together a diverse array of interested parties and local experts to develop a new vision for watershed management.

Learn more about this project, log on to www.arroyoseco.org (click on "Watershed Study"). For opportunity to provide input, attend the next community meeting, 7 PM, Wednesday, March 22 at the Los Angeles River Center and Gardens.