

**Iraheta, Alba**

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**Subject:** FW: Arroyo Seco Canyon Project

**From:** Robert Lydecker <[robert.lydecker@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:robert.lydecker@cityofpasadena.net)>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 12, 2021 11:30:02 AM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark <[mjomsky@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:mjomsky@cityofpasadena.net)>  
**Subject:** Arroyo Seco Canyon Project

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Dear Mr. Jomsky,

I just sent this note to Mayor Gordo and Councilman Masuda. I wanted to send it to you as well. Thanks for your time!!!

I'm writing about PWP's proposed Arroyo Seco Canyon Project. I've read information on both sides of the debate and both seem to have good talking points. The PWP clearly needs to update some of their infrastructure, and Pasadena needs to ensure a reliable water supply. But the critiques of the spreading basins, diversion of water from the river, and concerns about the suitability of the plan for wildlife and habitat give me pause.

I'm wondering if there are other solutions to our current and future water needs that don't raise environmental concern. I would urge the PWP and Pasadena's government to consider a wider swath of options before taking action. Are there some alternate solutions that would satisfy everyone? Could water instead be diverted down-river in an area where wildlife and natural habitat were already been paved over years ago? Could there be a plan to capture more stormwater runoff throughout the city? Could we decrease runoff throughout the city over time and refill our aquifers by replacing concrete, grass, dirt lots, etc with our native chaparrals and trees? Could the city have more campaigns to help residents use less water -- through simple greywater systems, different landscaping, or even just better habits? Can we improve our water situation in a way that's actually good for the local ecology? I'm not an expert, but it does seem like keeping the Hahamonga watershed as natural as possible could work better than spreading basins. The native landscapes evolved over eons and kept the aquifers full. As opposed to barren spreading basins, a natural watershed would be filled with plants that would diminish evaporation, slow and increase the infiltration of water into soils, and prevent erosion. I'm sure there are many other great ideas we could utilize.

We are going to be facing a lot of challenges in the coming years with climate change and a politically divided nation. We will have to think creatively. Maybe this can be a small opportunity for us to find a solution that makes everyone happy. I'm not confident that the Arroyo Seco Canyon Project is the solution we all are looking for, but I am confident that we can figure out water solutions that provide for the human residents of Pasadena and for all the wonderful non-human residents.

I appreciate your time and work on this and all the other tasks at hand!

Best,  
Bob Lydecker

**Iraheta, Alba**

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**From:** Claire Mesesan < >  
**Sent:** Monday, July 12, 2021 11:39 AM  
**To:** PublicComment-AutoResponse  
**Subject:** Public Comment on Canyon Project - 7/12/21 City Council meeting

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I am writing in opposition to the ASCP as a non-resident, but frequent visitor to the Hahamonga watershed.

Let the river flow. A living, natural stream is a better way to conserve water than artificial spreading basins. There are numerous benefits to supporting a living watershed through grasslands and riparian habitat: carbon is effectively sequestered, nutrient-rich top soil is created as sediment flows, water is cleaned, and evaporation is minimal. Living waterways are effective at harvesting water, whereas spreading basins offer nothing to the broader ecosystem. The ecosystem services provided by living watersheds not only protect the native fish (including the steelhead trout!) and wildlife in the arroyo, but also improve resilience against climate change. Living watersheds also support important fire resilience that a concrete basin cannot. Do not degrade Hahamonga further – restore and heal the arroyo.

Claire Mesesan

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Opinion & Columnists

## Guest Opinion | Tim Brick: Let the River Flow, Heal the Basin

Published in PasadenaNow on Thursday, June 3, 2021 | 1:04 pm



California water agencies have a tough time providing safe reliable water to their customers. I know. I served on the board of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California for twenty-eight years and was chairman from 2006-2010.

Many of the past engineering approaches have not produced up to expectations, and there is increasing awareness of the negative impacts of their operations and of the unprecedented challenges of climate change. So water agencies throughout California are now striving to implement Governor Newsom's mandate to develop resilient water programs. Resilience, the governor says, is the ability "to cope with more extreme droughts and floods, rising temperatures, declining fish populations, over-reliance on groundwater and other challenges."

But not Pasadena. Pasadena has a water crisis that it refuses to acknowledge. In the next month the City Council will consider a series of projects and programs that will have generational impacts on Pasadena and our community and test our city's commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship.

Next Monday, June 7th, the City Council will consider the [Arroyo Seco Canyon Project](#) (ASCP), a proposal by the Water & Power Department (PWP) to build a new dam and diversion facilities near the mouth of the Arroyo Seco and expand the spreading basins that line the east side of

Hahamongna Watershed Park. The Arroyo Seco Foundation and Pasadena Audubon Society are appealing the certification of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for this project because we believe that ASCP will have permanent detrimental impacts on the habitat, wildlife and water resources in Hahamongna and the Arroyo Seco and on the Raymond Groundwater Basin. More than 1,000 local residents agree with us. Perhaps the best way to understand the destructive nature of this project is to read the eloquent comments of those who have signed the petition opposing it.

PWP claims that ASCP will enhance local water resources, but ultimately its purpose is to pump more water from a depleted groundwater basin without any plan to replenish the basin. The new ASCP dam and diversion facilities will drain the Arroyo stream during dry periods with no regard for impacts on fish and aquatic species.

PWP's EIR denies there are native fish in the Arroyo. Although there have been harsh conditions in the last ten years for native fish, rainbow trout and steelhead have thrived in the Arroyo for several million years. Any doubt about their presence was destroyed last Fall when the California Department of Fish and Wildlife translocated 469 rainbow trout into the Arroyo as part of a rescue operation on the West Fork of the San Gabriel River following the Bobcat Fire. There is no longer any denying that there are actually hundreds of rainbow trout in the Arroyo Seco and that Pasadena has an obligation to be good stewards of these fish and the other natural resources of the Arroyo that it exploits. The ASCP facilities, however, were not designed to accommodate native fish.

Rainbow trout, though, are not the only important matter ASCP and its EIR ignore.

- ASCP fails to evaluate the potential impacts of climate change, relying on outdated historical patterns;
- ASCP fails to analyze the stream hydrology in the Hahamongna basin and its ability to more effectively conserve water than sterile spreading basins;
- ASCP fails to consider the negative impacts of the project on the Raymond Groundwater Basin, although it will contribute to the devastating decline of groundwater levels beneath Pasadena.

Eighty years ago Pasadena was forward-looking and worked with other local pumpers to establish a division of pumping rights to ensure a "safe" or sustainable yield from the Raymond Basin where extractions would be matched by natural replenishment. That adjudication, however, has not worked. Since it was established in 1944 the groundwater level has fallen 250 feet.

ASCP does not magically create or conserve new water. Rather it takes streamflow that would naturally percolate in the alluvial sands of Hahamongna to replenish the Raymond Basin and claims pumping rights to extract 80% of that water from that basin in the near future. PWP contends that they are helping the basin by leaving 20% of their diversions in the basin. In fact they are robbing the basin of 80% of the diverted water that would normally replenish the basin. And they don't have a plan for replenishing the basin. That kind of arithmetic is why the



groundwater level keeps falling three feet a year despite a “safe yield” adjudication. It is a cynical swindle of the groundwater basin and of future generations.

There is a better way. As the petition advocates, Pasadena should protect the natural character of our region’s greatest environmental treasures by:

1. using the living Arroyo stream to capture storm flows and protect precious habitat;
2. ensuring an adequate environmental flow for fish and wildlife during the dry season; and
3. committing to a plan to stabilize and replenish the Raymond Groundwater Basin.

Let the River Flow, Heal the Basin

*Tim Brick is the Managing Director of the Arroyo Seco Foundation*

**Iraheta, Alba**

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**Subject:** FW: Arroyo Seco Water Diversion

**From:** Dustin D

**Sent:** Monday, July 12, 2021 1:19 PM

**To:** PublicComment-AutoResponse <publiccomment@cityofpasadena.net>

**Subject:** Arroyo Seco Water Diversion

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Greetings, My name is Dustin Delaney

The Arroyo Seco Canyon project as it is currently proposed does not meet my needs as a community member. The relationship between "spreading ponds" and the non existent measurement of "new water" appears to only exist to satisfy a "pumping credits" statistic that continues to dangerously exploit, damage and drain the Raymond Basin Aquifer at the same rate that has been occurring since 1945. In 2021 this is unacceptable and a willful disregard of our current ecological situation.

I'm a Pasadena resident and homeowner. My family and I are avid year round Arroyo Seco canyon community members. The Arroyo Seco is a critical part of our personal family culture. It's a respite from the heat of summer, an outdoor classroom, a daily mountain bike ride, hikes, and fly fishing for trout. There is value in that place that is beyond monetary. This sentiment is more than "environmentalism"; it is essentialism.

As I write this, California is deep into the summer drought of 2021. We continue to see diminished rainfall while historic temperature records are shattered across the country. I've personally watched the Sierra snowpack become less and less every year over the course of my lifetime. I understand where my local water comes from and have done what I can to reduce my impact on the aquifer by taking advantage of rainwater barrel subsidies, greywater installation, and the city's turf replacement program. I understand that none of us can live in this amazing place if we don't respect our watershed.

Which brings me to the Trout. **The trout in the arroyo define Pasadena.** Charles Holder, the founder of the Tournament of Roses was an ecologist and an avid fisherman of trout in the Arroyo Seco. These trout represent more of the history of this city than any manicured lawn ever will. I personally have put on a wetsuit and snorkel and swam in the river to see for myself these aquatic residents. The city has a responsibility to preserve its own history by protecting these fish and in so doing becoming richer through its diversity of positions representing the value of it's ecological heritage and it's native people's heritage. Allowing the Arroyo to flow freely projects a clear message that the city wants to see the steelhead swimming through the LA River back to the Hahamongna watershed to spawn. Any city that has trout in it's watershed immediately gains cultural value. The fish represent the priorities, health and vitality of the citizens and elected leaders because the environment needed to sustain trout must itself be unpolluted and protected.

I implore our city leaders to look closely at the Arroyo Seco Canyon Project as a decisive moment in Pasadena's future and as an opportunity to reconcile the mistakes of the watershed management practices of the past. I am asking that the proposed watershed solutions in the Arroyo Canyon Project presented be amended to put the water back in the aquifer not through clever engineering of evaporative spreading ponds and non existent percolation metrics but to **Restore the flow to the Arroyo**. Which until 1945 worked for millions of previous years. Save the Trout, Save the People.

Thank You,  
Dustin Delaney.

## Iraheta, Alba

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**From:** I  
**Sent:** Monday, July 12, 2021 12:25 PM  
**To:** PublicComment-AutoResponse  
**Subject:** Arroyo Seco project

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To whom it may concern,

Please don't allow the city to continue with the Arroyo Seco Project. Please stop the money making from our pumping out our shared water. Please encourage (better yet mandate )that the pasadena water department take steps, instead, to educate the public on water saving and drought tolerant landscaping. Also maybe change the golf courses to one that don't use grass.

Best,

Michele Forrest

Sent from Smallbiz Yahoo Mail for iPhone

<<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Foverview.mail.yahoo.com%2F%3F.src%3DiOS&data=04%7C01%7Cairaheta%40cityofpasadena.net%7Cc25cfea889ec48029e0708d9456ac9c7%7C82d9fc002c664402a28fc6bcd32e491%7C1%7C0%7C637617149173534287%7CUnknown%7CTWfpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoimC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQljoiv2luMzliLCJBTiI6lk1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=3iipIMyo%2FmplwbWLaGoaAe3H%2B90NOrTtW%2Bmo4Z2tKek%3D&reserved=0>>

**Jomsky, Mark**

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**From:** Tommy Sheno  
**Sent:** Monday, July 12, 2021 1:06 PM  
**Subject:** NO to ASCP

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Hello,

As someone who is a resident in Pasadena and has studied the environmental science behind groundwater, water basins, reservoirs, and droughts in Southern California, I can assure you that redirecting the water is not a wise plan and decision and will result in cycles of depletion and degradation that will wholly effect and transform the landscape and nature of Pasadena's ecosystems. Raymond Basin does not and cannot afford to be depleted anymore. We must uphold the land, fish and wildlife native to the Arroyo and conserve the water rather than utilize it for consumption in which it will end up in the ocean. This project would contribute to the unequal equilibriums and in and out fluxes of freshwater being used and exhausted into the ocean, where it won't reenter our systems for a long period of time, unlike if it remains in our watershed and basin. Pasadena Water & Power should be a steward of the natural resources it seeks to exploit. It must uphold the science and the wildlife: the needs and wants of water and water security are only achieved by putting the land first- not by exploiting it. We need resilience- not degradation. Speak on behalf of the rivers that have provided for you- use your power positively. The destruction of so many other important ecosystems in Southern California is what makes Hahamongna so special - because it has been resilient and been taken care of by local community members. Recognize this and preserve it. Use this opportunity within Pasadena Water & Power to correct many of the systemic issues that plague our nation and contribute to environmental injustices especially pertaining to water: the pursuit of gentrification, privatization, unequal resource consumption, lack of transparency, and departments guided without principle.

Thank you for listening,  
Tommy



## Iraheta, Alba

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**From:** Ako Castuera <  
**Sent:** Monday, July 12, 2021 4:26 PM  
**To:** PublicComment-AutoResponse  
**Subject:** City council hearing 7/12 Trout in the Arroyo!

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Dear Mayor Gordo and Members of the City Council,

My name is Ako Castuera. Over the last 25 years, I have worked, attended school, created, shopped, volunteered and at times, lived in Pasadena. I love this place and am grateful for how much it has given and shaped me. I want to reciprocate by adding my voice in support of what I know will increase Pasadena's value and beauty for generations to come.

I am calling on you to help protect and support the unique and precious ecosystem of Hahamongna & Raymond Basin. Hahamongna is a sacred location, with historic and ecological significance. It needs to be protected from further environmental degradation.

I was moved and overjoyed to see the reappearance of trout in the Arroyo, and to read about it in the Los Angeles Times. The trout are a beacon of hope in a county and state beleaguered by appalling loss to native plant and animal species due to climate change, pollution and overdevelopment. We must do everything in your power to protect this Native species and give it every chance to flourish. There are so many eyes on this issue, because it's a story that brings us hope.

Pasadena Water and Power needs to carefully consider its role, and act in a way that shows leadership in stewarding water as a precious resource, whose use and management should reflect the interests of the community- real individuals with relationships to the land. PWP needs to listen to the people, and work for the people and the land!

Please vote in favor of the long arc that bends toward true abundance - by that, I mean the potential for a thriving ecosystem with waterways that provide life to the soil, plants and animals of the region. It is a grand responsibility. Please support the Arroyo, the trout, and the people who will benefit for generations - say NO to ASCP! The Arroyo Seco Canyon Project is shortsighted folly that will do irreversible harm to one of Pasadena's most precious environmental assets.

I am appealing to you to show strength and leadership.  
To Trout in the Arroyo and an abundant future,

Ako Castuera