

# Executive Meeting Summary

**Project Title:** AB 466 UPPER LOS ANGELES RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES REVITALIZATION PLAN

**Purpose of Meeting:** Water and Environment Committee Meeting- November 2018

## MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

### REVITALIZATION PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Upon further discussion, no further comment was provided for the Plan goals and objectives presented in previous committee meetings:

- *Focus on community engagement especially in underserved communities*
- *Focus on Tributaries where there is not already planning or project building efforts; especially those that are neglected shall be prioritized- although all tributaries in study area shall be accounted for.*
- *Refer to previous planning efforts whenever possible and fill in gaps, identify and incorporate inconsistencies*

### PLAN MISSION STATEMENT

Additional emphasis on flood risk to adjacent communities was added to the mission statement with input from previous committee meetings (updates in [blue](#)).

*The mission of the Upper LA River & Tributaries Revitalization Plan is to foster the creation of prioritized opportunities with the following components:*

- *Open space*
- *Multiple benefits*
- *Safe access*
- *Alignment with community needs and feedback*
- *Alignment with funding sources*
- *Nature based and [watershed management](#)*
- *[Reduction and management of existing flood risks to communities](#)*

### COMMITTEE PURPOSE

No additional comments were provided for the committee purpose after input from previous meetings was incorporated. *The purpose of the Water and Environment committee is to identify and prioritize the opportunities that focus on the community need for public safety and responsibility for a sustainable environment for the Upper Los Angeles River and its Tributaries using an integrated approach (water resources/conservation/quality/recreation source).*

### COMMITTEE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A discussion and chart-scribed exercise delving further into the goals and objectives, modified to include committee feedback, was held to lay the foundation for the next steps for the project team. Committee members were asked to share how they envision the plan moving forward.

- **Create equitable opportunities to enhance the ecosystem, watershed health, water supply, and improve water quality**  
Meaning: ecosystem equity, upstream and downstream taken into account, holistic water management; multi-scale (regional, distributed), includes all “types” of water (rainwater, stormwater, groundwater, surface water, etc.), connectivity amongst communities and neighborhoods  
Metrics: Community engagement, proximity, watershed education, habitat/wildlife, demographics adjacent to the tributary or river, perception of safety  
Method: water capture (not just stormwater), enhanced retention of water, Measure W
- **Maintain or enhance flood management**  
Meaning: Reduce and balance risk with other benefits, protect life and property especially if more access is provided  
Metrics: Level of protection (storm size), customized to scale

Methods: FEMA products, stormwater capture (infiltration ex Betty Davis Park), floodplain buy-back, identification of areas with high risk, identify future planning efforts, ensure plan meets county and federal standards with respect to rainfall vs. runoff

- **Balance the utilization of available space and resources for both the environment and the community**

Meaning: Avoid displacement, address gentrification, protect health and safety

Metric: Area public right of way that can be utilized for environment or community, number of projects with environment and community components

Method: Floodplain buyback, regional water master planning (County Water Plan), specific projects with greening components (greenways, street ends), convert pockets and corridors, use public space to take run on during storm events to prevent flooding in populated areas

- **Assess all opportunities for resiliency**

Meaning: Temperature/precipitation effect on ecosystems, energy and greenhouse gas used for water

Metrics: mirror state funding sources such as the Natural and Working Lands Implementation Plan

Methods: Leverage CNRA Agency (through state), compare to resiliency of natural systems, consider standards and guidelines for design

## GAPS ANALYSIS HIGHLIGHTS

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A brief discussion of the findings of the data and planning gap analysis was undertaken. The main *data gap highlights* were; identification of what makes each of the subwatersheds unique and how they relate and connect to one another, planning for network connectivity for both nature and nonmotorized transportation, consistency in scale of planning, suspected discharges to the tributaries, amenities along the river, community or grant funded park space. *Planning gap highlights* included that there has been planning throughout the watershed however the focus or scale varies drastically with significant room for additional planning in certain portions of the watershed.

## TRIBUTARIES OVERVIEW AND CHARACTERIZATION

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*Tributary Characterization Matrix* was revisited. Mayor Emily Gabel-Luddy requested that the matrix have the following footnote added to all instances of the matrix going forward. "The primary daily flows in the Burbank Western Channel are reclaimed imported water to be programed for reuse". A brief presentation of the *character of the primary tributaries* (Aliso Canyon, Arroyo Seco, Burbank Western, Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, Verdugo Wash) was given to provide context for committee members who had not previously visited all primary tributaries. Further committee meetings will build on this exercise to explore what it is like to live in and visit these areas.

## RELEVANT CASE STUDIES AND BEST PRACTICES

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*Tributary scale urban case studies* at the following locations were presented to learn about previous planning methods used; Guadalupe River Park (San Jose, California), Conway Urban Watershed (Conway, Arkansas), Mill Creek Watershed (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), San Pedro Creek (San Antonio, Texas). *Common best practices* for habitat restoration, green infrastructure, and connectivity were presented to spark ideas for how other plans have met similar goals and objectives to those discussed earlier in the meeting.

## PRESENTATION ON THE CITY OF LA BIODIVERSITY INDEX

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Isaac Brown of LASAN and UCLA presented a brief overview of his post-doctoral work involving creation and analysis of a Biodiversity index for Los Angeles County. Much of ULART is in the Upper LA River Alluvial plan which shares similar native biodiversity. There are only a few large patches of habitat in the plan and additional work to analyze habitat connectivity is underway. The final report is meant to identify areas of need and standardize metrics and measurements across the County. The report will be complete in 2019.

## ATTENDEES

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Committee Members: Tim Brick (Director, Arroyo Seco Foundation), Virdiana Velez (alternate for Hon. Sheila Kuehl, SD3), Keith Lilley (alternate for Mark Pestrella, LACDPW), Phuoc Le (alternate for Enrique Zaldivar), Yaz Emrani (Alternate for Mayor Sylvia Ballin, City of San Fernando), Onnig Bulanikian (alternate for Mayor Zareh Sinanyan, City of Glendale), Hon. Emily Gabel-Luddy (Mayor of Burbank), Humberto Quintana (alternate for Hon. Monica Rodriguez, CD7)