

# Upper LA River & Tributaries Revitalization Plan

## Community Meeting

**October 15, 2019**

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

570 W. Avenue 26

Los Angeles, CA 90065

Los Angeles River Center and Gardens

## S U M M A R Y

---

### **Introduction**

On October 15, 2019 the Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Working Group (Working Group) established within the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, pursuant to Assembly Bill 466 (AB 466) and Senate Bill 1126 (SB 1126), hosted a community meeting. The meeting was part of a series of three phases, this being phase 3 of community outreach and engagement, in an effort to solicit input into the Draft Upper Los Angeles River & Tributaries (ULART) Revitalization Plan (Plan), Volume 1. The format for the meeting was an open house. Participants were presented with an update on the process, Plan contents and overview of the ways that they can provide their comments on the plan. Following the presentation, they had an opportunity to review the Draft Plan chapters 1 and 2. Chapter 1 was available in English, while Chapter 2 was available in both English and Spanish. Chapter 1 in Spanish will be available soon. Approximately 50 community members attended the meeting.

Friends of the Los Angeles River (FoLAR) and Pacoima Beautiful cohosted the meeting. Shelly Backlar of FoLAR opened the meeting with a welcome and overview. Ms. Backlar explained that the role of the NGOs was to conduct outreach to ensure a broad range of community participation. She provided a brief presentation that summarized community engagement efforts for the first and second phase of the ULART Revitalization Plan process. Sarah Rascon of MRCA presented the ULART goals, the planning process, and the Draft Plan's organization. Ms. Rascon explained that the Draft Plan is being released for comment as chapters are completed by the technical team. Remaining sections will be available in December. Comments will be received until the middle part of January 2020.

Esmeralda García of MIG reviewed how participants would be providing comments on chapters 1 and 2 during the meeting. She explained that participants could review hard copies of the Draft Plan chapters 1 and 2 and submit written responses on comment sheets provided at the tables in the center of the room. A second option was to review a digital version of the Draft Plan chapters 1 and 2 and provide comments electronically through a web portal accessible on the ULART project website. Ms. García explained how members of the public can scroll through the document and provide comments on specific sections of the plan and submit. If someone would like to spend more time

reviewing and writing comments, the user could create an account in order to save the comments made over an extended period of time before submitting. She provided the links to the web portal:

English version: <https://upperlariver.konveio.com/>

Spanish version: <https://upperlariver.konveio.com/espanol>

Following the presentation Ms. Rascon addressed community member questions about the process. The group was then invited to review the Draft Plan chapters 1 and 2 and provide hand written comments or through the web portal on computers provided during the meeting. Participants also had an opportunity to view highlights of the proposed opportunity areas for each tributary. Community members also participated in an activity to share where they live.

Below is a summary of input gathered during the meeting.

### **Tell us where you live**

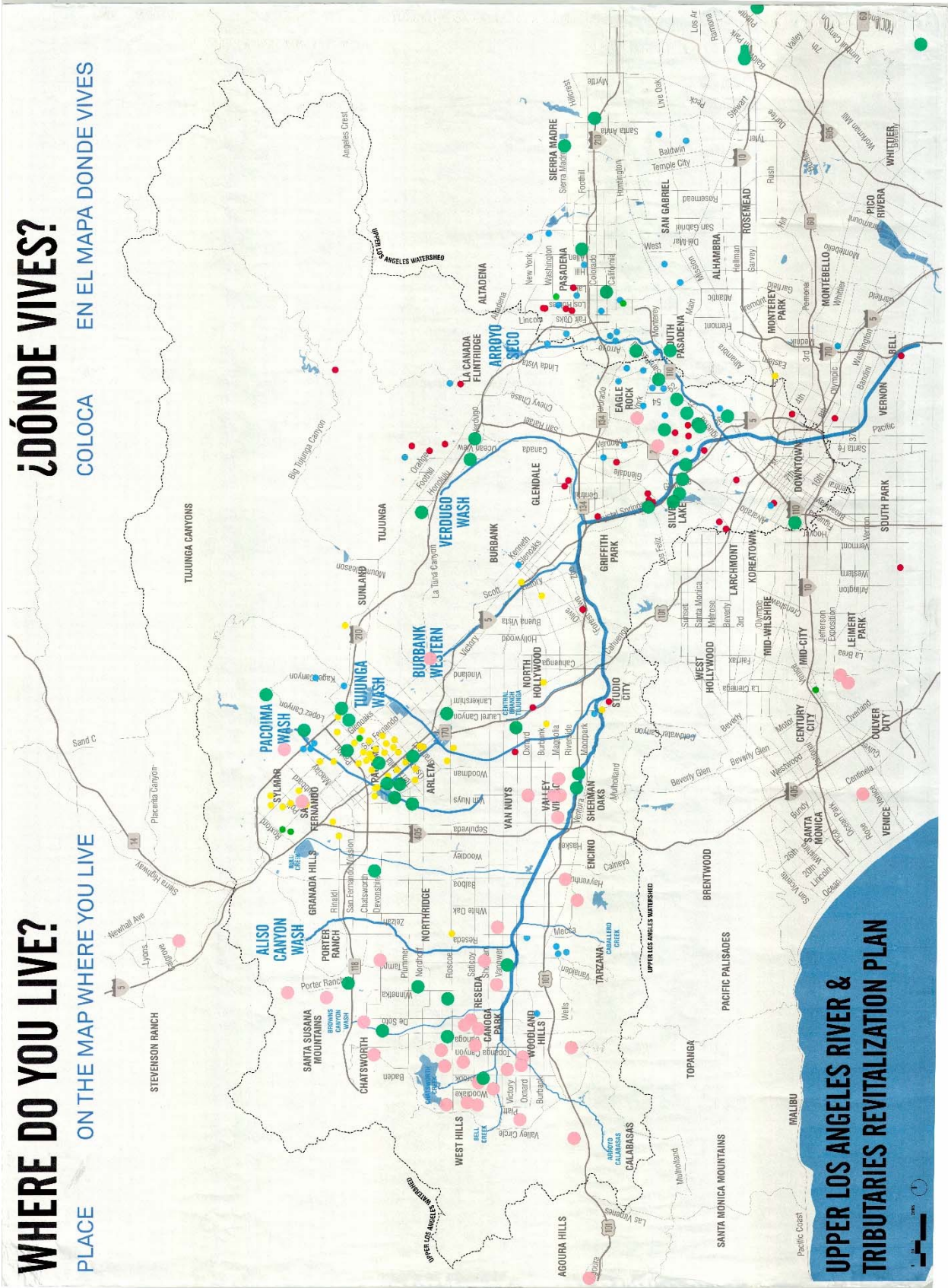
Community members placed dots on a map of the study area to show where they live in relation to the Upper LA River & Tributaries.

# WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

PLACE ON THE MAP WHERE YOU LIVE

# ¿DÓNDE VIVES?

COLOCA EN EL MAPA DONDE VIVES



## UPPER LOS ANGELES RIVER & TRIBUTARIES REVITALIZATION PLAN

**The following questions and comments were made during the presentation:**

- Why is the word “buffer” being used? It (buffer) makes it seem like something bad is going to happen in that area. Boundary is a better word.
- Is a hydrology study part of this process and will it (hydrology) be looked at for potential funding?
- The upper LA River watershed in the San Fernando Valley is polluted and these properties (where projects are being proposed) will impact the LA River. Pollutants need to be considered. This process is being rushed; there should be a longer study.
- What about Measure S? How is it (funding) connected to this effort?
- What are the future chapters that will be released?
- Topics that need to be addressed include cleaning contaminated soil and water so people can have contact with the LA River Flood Control Channel. Contaminants are always in the channel. We are concerned with health and safety in our community. How will these (issues) be addressed?
- I thought the Working Group was divided into two sub-committees. What happened to them?
- Who (on the Working Group) represent us in the Elysian Valley and Cypress Park? Where are the members of the public?
- Regarding suggested or proposed projects, who is/are the groups leading these projects? Who are people who are deciding what will happen on the tributaries leading the projects?

The following is a synopsis of questions and comments received during the open house portion of the meeting.

- We are concerned with safety, water quality and the affects they have on our health. We should be asked what we want.
- **Regarding the map for the Verdugo Wash:** Is the road along the open space considered the ½ mile boundary next to the Verdugo Wash? This map is missing a park in Glendale that is a historic park. Other parks in the area are not clearly delineated either. This map ignores all of the open space next to the Glendale Park Complex. There are hiking trails that go into the Verdugos. There are links on either side of the Fern Bridge. There needs to be connectivity next to the 2 Freeway.
- **Regarding the proposed Spreading Ground wetland project near the Pacoima Wash:** Wetlands can have algal blooms unless they are designed properly. Will this be considered in the project design? What does the community think about this project? Where was the funding for this project from – state or local funding?
- **Comments from a member of the public regarding the San Fernando Valley/Pacoima Wash map:** All of this area in the northern San Fernando Valley is toxic industrial land. These projects need to consider these toxins. Every time it rains these toxins wash into the tributaries and into the LA River.

- Another community member, after the man talking about all the toxic pollution left: At least this is a step toward making things better. It is good to have areas that can filter the water.

**Upper LA River & Tributaries Revitalization Plan Chapters 1 and 2 questions and comments:**

**Chapter 1:**

- Good overview of the history of the LA River. However, it does not demonstrate clearly exactly what is included in the two plans. Also, it's not clear what the two working groups have achieved so far.
- Include ½ “buffer” boundary in map labeled “project area” in the executive summary.
- Page 2, the legend is missing, scale.
- Page 9, the map should distinguish that LARMP does not include tributaries.

**Chapter 2:**

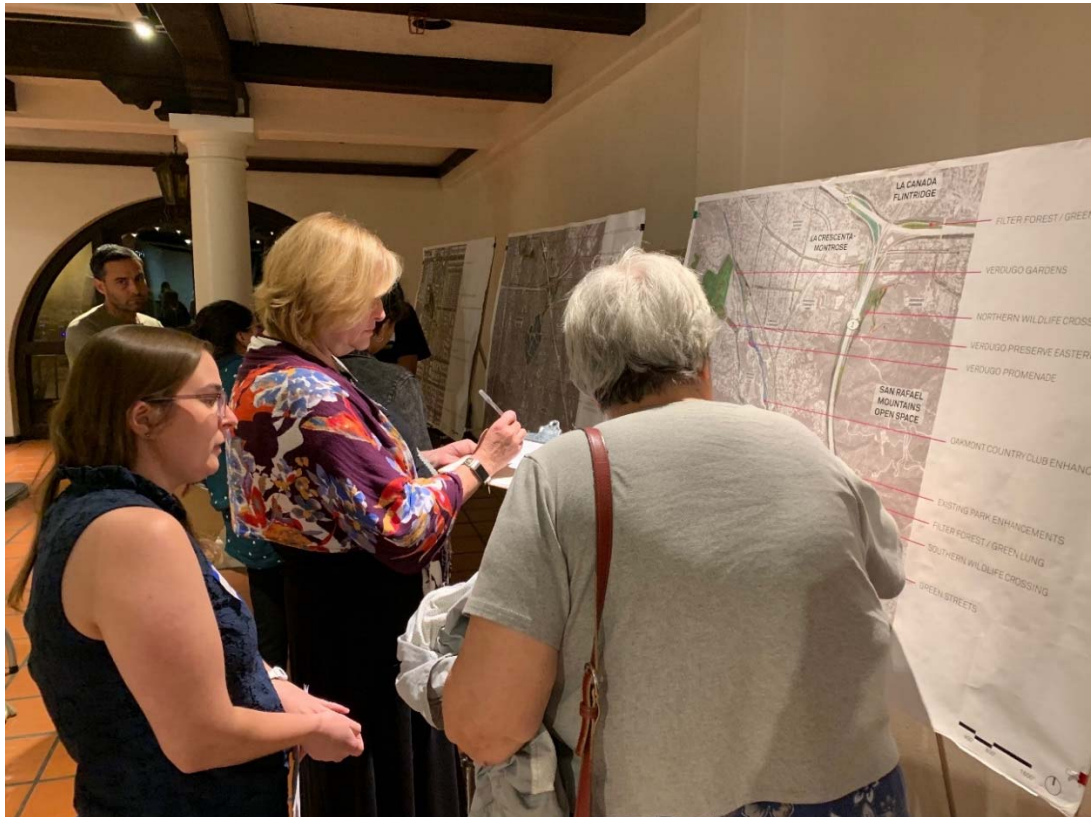
- Good work on the plan vision input. Keep up the good work!
- Page 16, legend and scale.

**The following is a summary of comments received on the comment forms provided during the meeting.**

- What will other chapters be? We only saw chapters 1 & 2.
- How are you planning on cleaning all of the toxins and chemicals from the project areas (underground)?
- How will this (toxins/chemicals) affect people/river (runoff)?
- What happened to the two subcommittees?
- Will hydrology be incorporated?
- How feasible is this plan?
- Promote meetings at schools – especially schools and libraries in the neighborhood as well as shops.
- Working groups should include community members. Meetings are during a 9 to 5 working schedule; most people can't make that unless it is their job to attend and people who need to be invested are not getting paid to attend meetings.

Photos of community meeting







**Scanned Comment Sheets Follow**