



NEWS

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Contact: Kerjon Lee
Office: (626) 458-4348
Mobile: (626) 476-0533
kelee@dpw.lacounty.gov

River Restoration Provides Valley Community with Open Space and a Defense against Dwindling Water Supplies

With LA County facing one of the driest years on record, a new multi-benefit project in the San Fernando Valley provides open space and vital groundwater recharge.

VALLEY GLEN, CALIF.

NEWS FACTS

- Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky, Joseph T. Edmiston, executive director of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and residents of the Valley Glen community celebrated the opening of the \$7 million **Tujunga Wash Greenway and Stream Restoration Project** today.
- With its new pathways and meandering streambed, this joint project between the County of Los Angeles and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy brings plant and animal habitat, water quality enhancement, groundwater replenishment, and passive recreation to a one mile reach of the Tujunga Wash. Both sides of the Wash (between Vanowen St. and Oxnard Ave.) now feature vibrant vegetation that is native to the Los Angeles River Watershed and pathways for walking and biking.
- To reintroduce a sustainable, healthy stream system into the park-poor community of Valley Glen, the Los Angeles County Flood Control District moved water away from the concrete channel that has fed directly into the Los Angeles River since 1952. During a year with average rainfall, as much as 325,000 gallons a day will flow through the Wash's new naturalized streambed, resulting in improved water quality for the region and enough groundwater recharge to provide 760 families of four with drinking water for an entire year.
- The San Fernando Valley sits atop the San Fernando Valley Groundwater Basin, an underground aquifer that provides nearly 15 percent of the water supply used for potable (suitable for drinking) use. While the Tujunga Wash was an excellent source of groundwater recharge in the past, it was also prone to widespread flooding and erosion. To enhance flood protection for the Wash's neighboring communities, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers built a nine mile concrete-lined channel between 1950 and 1952 to funnel stormwater flows directly to the Los Angeles River and away from city streets.

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- Funding for the \$7 million project came from a variety of sources, including: \$3 million, Los Angeles County Proposition A Parks and Recreation Property Assessment; \$1.9 million, State of California Resources Agency; \$525,000, State of California Department of Water Resources Proposition 13; \$1.5 million, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works.

ATTRIBUTABLE QUOTES

“By restoring the Tujunga Wash to a more natural state, we are boosting our local groundwater supply and creating a park-like environment to enhance this densely populated urban community.” – Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

“Completing the Tujunga Wash Greenway and River Restoration Project marks a healthy step forward in meeting the future water supply needs of Los Angeles County.”
– Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

“The Tujunga Wash Greenway and Stream Restoration Project provides an innovative solution to regional water quality and supply challenges, while restoring natural habitat and bringing parkland to the urban core. It is a model that can be replicated throughout Southern California.”
– Joseph T. Edmiston, executive director of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy

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ABOUT THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

The County of Los Angeles maintains approximately 500 miles of open channel, 2,800 miles of underground storm drain and 79,000 catch basins. The County’s stormwater program is developed under the oversight of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, the state agency that is responsible for overseeing these programs, and is undertaken in partnership with the cities at the beaches and in the watersheds. The County’s stormwater program includes multifaceted public education efforts such as stenciling storm drains and airing public service announcements, as well as extensive structural improvements, such as devices to exclude trash from entering into the streams and waterbodies and low-flow stormwater diversion devices at the beaches.

ABOUT THE SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy was established by the California State Legislature in 1980. Since that time, it has helped to preserve over 60,000 acres of parkland in both wilderness and urban settings, and has improved more than 114 public recreational facilities throughout Southern California. Through direct action, alliances, partnerships, and joint powers authorities, the Conservancy’s mission is to strategically buy back, preserve, protect, restore, and enhance treasured pieces of Southern California to form an interlinking system of urban, rural and river parks, open space, trails, and wildlife habitats that are easily accessible to the general public.