LOS ANGELES COUNTY	1
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Massood Eftekhari From: Gary Hildebrand Cold Date: June 11, 2013

LETTERGRAM

Subject: Los Angeles County Flood Control District Policy on Additional Vegetation in Los Angeles River Watershed Soft-Bottom Channel Reaches 1, 9, 19-22, and 25.

Attached for your approval is the policy addressing the allowance of additional vegetation in the Los Angeles River.

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Attach.

To:

cc: Flood Maintenance (Hanson) Land Development (Nyivih) Water Resources (Stone)



Approved by

6/27/13

Date



Mark Pestrella, Assistant Director

## LOS ANGELES COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT POLICY ON ADDITIONAL VEGETATION IN LOS ANGELES RIVER WATERSHED SOFT-BOTTOM CHANNEL REACHES 1, 9, 19-22, AND 25

The Los Angeles County Flood Control Act (Act) establishes a priority for flood protection and water conservation over recreational, education, and other uses of watercourses under the control of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD). However, when (and only when) it is consistent with the LACFCD's flood control and water conservation objectives, the Act authorizes the LACFCD to take actions to preserve and enhance features on its properties for the protection, preservation, and use of the scenic beauty and natural environment.

The LACFCD supports an adaptive management approach for facilities, which recognizes that facilities can be managed to provide other benefits without increasing flood risk to an unacceptable level. A Study<sup>1</sup> was conducted of the major watercourses in the Los Angeles River Watershed to determine where the perpetual presence of some level of native vegetation might be consistent with the objectives for flood protection and water conservation in those watercourses. The study included both biological and hydraulic studies and analyses.

The study indicated that the estimated actual capacity of certain watercourses (Soft-Bottom Channel (SBC) Reaches 1, 9, 19-22, and 25) is significantly greater than the original design flow rate of those reaches. For these SBC reaches, recommended vegetation levels were developed by BonTerra Consulting, a biological consultant to the LACFCD.

The study also indicated the following:

- The recommended vegetation levels would decrease the capacity of the subject reaches; however, the estimated capacity of these SBC reaches, assuming the presence of the recommended vegetation levels would still be substantially greater than the respective original design flow rate for each SBC reach.
- Assuming the recommended vegetation levels were maintained in each of the subject SBC reaches, the estimated capacity of each SBC reach would still be sufficient to convey an approximate 500-year frequency storm event (SBC Reach 25) or greater (SBC Reaches 1, 9, 19, 20, 21, and 22). The probability of occurrence of a 500-year frequency storm event is 0.2 percent in any given year.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Los Angeles River Soft-bottom Channel/Hydraulic Analysis Study by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works Water Resources Division, June 5, 2013.





## LOS ANGELES COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT POLICY ON ADDITIONAL VEGETATION IN LOS ANGELES RIVER WATERSHED SOFT-BOTTOM CHANNEL REACHES 1, 9, 19-22, AND 25

By allowing the recommended vegetation levels in the referenced watercourses, the scenic beauty of and natural environment in and around those watercourses would be better protected, preserved, and enhanced. In addition, the following benefits would be anticipated to accrue:

- The recommended vegetation levels would allow for additional habitat use by birds and other wildlife and provide greater connectivity between habitat areas;
- Increased biological and species diversity would result from the presence of the recommended vegetation levels in the specified SBC reaches of the Los Angeles River Watershed that do not presently contain such vegetation;
- Water-quality improvements would result from biological treatment of flows from small storms passing through the areas where recommended vegetation levels are present; and
- Increased vegetation in general would reduce air pollution and improve air quality in adjacent urban communities.

It is the determination of the LACFCD that the increase in the risk of overflow in the subject SBC reaches resulting from the presence of the recommended vegetation levels would be extremely small (less than 0.2 percent) and the possibility of overflow, even assuming the presence of the recommended vegetation levels, would still be extremely remote. Further, the remote risk of overflow associated with the recommended vegetation levels does not justify forgoing the environmental and other benefits that the recommended vegetation levels are anticipated to provide.

It is, therefore, the policy of the LACFCD to incorporate the recommended vegetation levels developed by BonTerra Consulting (as generally depicted on the attached exhibits) into the maintenance plan and practices for SBC Reaches 1, 9, 19-22, and 25 of the Los Angeles River Watershed, upon consultation with the appropriate jurisdictional agencies.

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LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

LOS ANGELES RIVER WATERSHED - SOFT-BOTTOM CHANNEL REACHES 1, 9, 19, 20-22, AND 25

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			LOS ANGELES	RIVER water	shed								
1 Bell Creek- MTD 963 M.C.I.	962' u/s of Highlander Rd	766' u/s of Highlander Rd	34.20286	118.65745	34.20182	118.65679	Riverine	Section 404	196	0.90	.os Angeles River	Calabasas	529-D5
9 Project 106 Outlet	400' d/s of Victory Blvd	520' d/s of Victory Blvd	34.18523	118.47415	34.18555	118.47416	Riverine	Section 404	120	0.12	os Angeles River	Van Nuys	531-G7
19 Pickens Canyon	D/s edge of Panorama Dr. produced	Pickens Debris Basin	34.22121	118.22870	34.22805	118.22709	Riverine	Section 404	2,406	3.42	Verdugo Wash	Pasadena	504-H5 to 534- H1
20 Webber Chril (stim @ private bridge)	861' u/s of Los Amigos St	746' u/s of Los Amigos St	34.22815	118.21661	34.22795	118.21702	Riverine	Section 404	115	0.13	Verdugo Wash	Pasadena	504-J7
21 Webber Chnl (main chnl inlet d/s bridge)	496' u/s of Los Arnigos St	471' u/s of Los Amigos St	34.22661	118.21876	34.22746	118.21782	Riverine	Section 404	25	0.03	Verdugo Wash	Pasadena	504-J7
22 Halls Canyon	1370' u/s of Jessen Dr	Halls Cyn Debris Basin	34.22317	118.22008	34.22678	118.21365	Riverine	Section 404	2,290	2.63	Verdugo Wash	Pasadena	534-J1
25 Los Angeles River	Willow St	Pacific Coast Hwy	33,80396	118.20365	33.79058	118.20354	Riverine	Section 404	4,800	56.20 L	os Angeles River	Long Beach	795-C3 to C5

LAR Watershed SBC Reaches with Recommendations (2)

Lasl Revised 5/9/2013

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