

Devil's Gate Reservoir Restoration Project

A Responsible Approach to Sediment Removal

Community Update:
Sediment removal to begin April 2019

Timeline



Restoring Community Flood Protection

In 2005, after major storms, Devil's Gate Reservoir reached its capacity. Water began to flow over the spillway, sending sediment-laden flows crashing over the dam's spillway and down the Arroyo Seco. Just four years later, the Station Fire burned more than 160,000 acres of the San Gabriel Mountains bringing in more than 1.3 million cubic yards (MCY) of sediment into the reservoir. This sediment was enough to fill three Rose Bowls, causing an increased urgency to remove it before another major storm event prevented the dam from providing the safety needed.

In April 2019, Los Angeles County Public Works will begin removing 1.7 MCY of sediment to restore the reservoir's capacity to withstand a future major storm event. The excess sediment currently within the reservoir could prevent the dam from doing its job. The sediment threatens to block the valves that allow dam operators to release stormwater in a controlled manner. If the sediment was allowed to remain, there is no guarantee for flood protection to businesses and families residing in Pasadena, South Pasadena, northeast Los Angeles, and portions of the 110 Freeway.



The County must remove the sediment to restore its capacity to protect the Arroyo Seco and numerous communities downstream from flooding.

Hahamongna Watershed and Native Habitat Protection

As part of this project, LA County Public Works is restoring and enhancing more than 70 acres of habitat within the Hahamongna Watershed. Habitat restoration activities include:

- removal of nonnative and invasive plant species
- minor grading
- irrigation installation
- installation of container plants, pole cuttings, and seeding

Nonnative and invasive weed removals began on November 19, 2018, to remove all plant species that do not belong in the Hahamongna ecosystem. Since then, approximately 196 tons of weedy plant material has been hand-removed from approximately 50 acres of land, including Perennial Pepper Weed,

Poison Hemlock, Black Mustard, and Himalayan Blackberry. Following initial weed removal efforts, the restoration sites will be planted and seeded with native plant species. A variety of vegetation communities will be included in the restoration effort, including Black Willow Thickets, Mulefat Thickets, Coast Live Oak Woodland, California Buckwheat Scrub, and Scale Broom Scrub. The first phase of planting and seeding is now under way.

As part of ongoing maintenance and area beautification, Public Works is reconfiguring a maintenance area for annual sediment removal. Habitat restoration areas will be established and maintained permanently around the perimeter of these areas enabling native habitat to co-exist in a sustainable manner with reservoir operations.



TOP: Invasive removal taking place to restore the habitat.



RIGHT: The California Buckwheat species, a native plant, will be planted to provide habitat for various wildlife.

Reducing Community Impact During Sediment Removal

Public health and safety are among the County's top priorities while working to restore the reservoir and Hahamongna Watershed area. Public Works is taking numerous steps to minimize the project's impact on local residents with strict hauling and construction requirements.

- Trucks will only use the newly-constructed access roads that will directly connect to Oak Grove Drive, avoiding any hauling on residential streets. Trucks will also avoid staging or queuing on all local streets.
- Hauling will only occur on weekdays, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and routes will be timed to prevent congestion during school drop-offs. There will be no hauling on weekends, holidays or during major Rose Bowl events.

- All trucks will be California Air Resources Board-certified, meeting or exceeding the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2010 model year emission standards for air quality protection.
- Contractors will have water trucks to water down the sediment, minimizing potential fugitive dust during sediment removal.
- Signage will be posted with contact information for the Contractor, County, and South Coast Air Quality Management District so that the public can immediately notify these agencies of any fugitive dust.
- Trucks will drive over tracking control devices to help remove residual dirt on their tires.
- Street sweepers will regularly clean the hauling routes to keep the streets clean and prevent dust.



Please visit our website at devilsgateproject.com for additional information about our responsible approach to sediment removal.

Protecting Endangered Birds from Predatory Cowbird

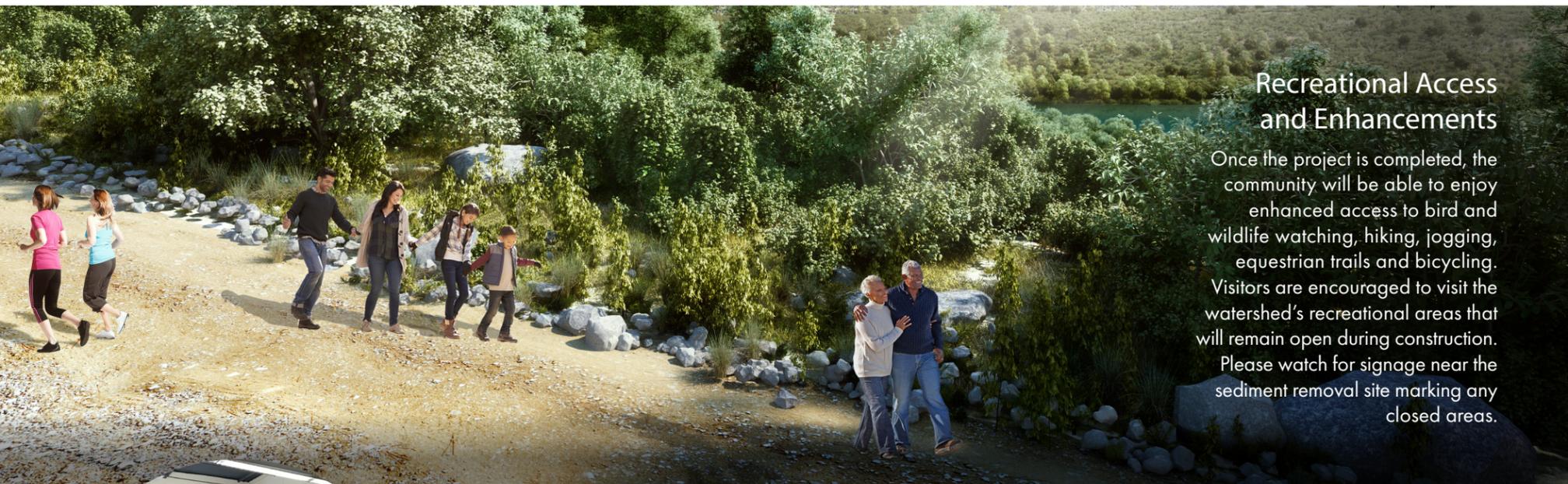


Public Works will be creating a brown-headed cowbird control program in the coming months. This program, within Hahamongna Watershed Park adjacent to the habitat restoration areas, will benefit native birds, specifically the federally-endangered least Bell's vireo. Brown-headed cowbirds are parasites to the nests of other birds. The cowbird lays its egg in the nest of an unsuspecting vireo, and the vireo may then raise the cowbird chick as its own.

The cowbird egg hatches earlier than the vireo eggs. The chick then grows much larger in less time, eventually outcompeting the vireo chicks and putting their lives at risk. Persistent cowbird parasitism has contributed to the decline of several bird species, including the least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, and the California gnatcatcher. Parasitism by cowbirds can be dramatically reduced by removing the cowbirds from the native birds' habitat during breeding season using several traps placed within the targeted habitat and at nearby cowbird foraging areas.

The only way to effectively control cowbirds is to capture adults during the breeding season. This

is done by using large cages containing "bait" cowbirds to capture additional cowbirds. In order to protect the endangered songbirds within Hahamongna, we will be placing trap cages with food and water in a few select areas to capture the cowbirds. Biologists will be on site daily to check the traps, remove any trapped cowbirds, and release any non-target birds. Traps will be operated between April and July of each year, which includes the nesting season for most bird species that are targeted by the brown-headed cowbird. If you see cages in Hahamongna during this time, remember that the birds inside may be harmful to local native songbirds if they are released, so please do not disturb them.



Recreational Access and Enhancements

Once the project is completed, the community will be able to enjoy enhanced access to bird and wildlife watching, hiking, jogging, equestrian trails and bicycling. Visitors are encouraged to visit the watershed's recreational areas that will remain open during construction. Please watch for signage near the sediment removal site marking any closed areas.

Did You Know?

The Devil's Gate Restoration Project is creating local jobs. Hiring events have been held looking for employees and local haulers to remove the sediment. Currently, the Contractor seeks owner-operator truck drivers with trucks meeting or exceeding model year 2010 emission standards. Qualified candidates are encouraged to contact the Project's Jobs Coordinator for more information and/or to apply.

Gonzalo Armijos, Project Jobs Coordinator
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Dec. 2018 Job Fair

To Learn More...

Since project planning began nine years ago, LA County Public Works has taken a community first approach. Public Works will continue to participate in community meetings to share project updates and information and address questions and concerns on a regular basis.

To learn more about the project and when we are in the community, we encourage you to visit the website or contact us directly.

Stay Informed



devilsgateproject.com



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