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## **Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Approves Funding for First Project of 100 Acre Partnership at Taylor Yard**

***Paseo del Río Project will connect 100 acres of public land along the Los Angeles River in Cypress Park***

**LOS ANGELES (June 3, 2020)** – At its Board meeting Monday, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) unanimously approved three grants, totaling \$10 million in State Proposition 1 funding, for the first project of the 100 Acre Partnership at Taylor Yard (Partnership). The project, known as the Paseo del Río project, will be an approximately one-mile long riverfront greenway, with amenities, developed with extensive community input.

With matching funds from the City of Los Angeles (City) and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks), these grants will support the design and construction of the project on the east side of the Los Angeles River in Cypress Park. The project will link the California State Parks-owned Bowtie parcel, to the adjacent G2 parcel, which is owned by the City and includes an easement owned by the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA). In addition to design and construction, the grants will support community engagement, project planning, environmental assessments, and environmental clearances.

Three separate grants were awarded by the SMMC Board for the Paseo del Río project. MRCA received a grant for \$1.36 million to fund community engagement, project planning and design of the Paseo on the G2 parcel. State Parks received a \$2.8 million grant to fund community engagement, project planning and design, and construction for the Paseo on the Bowtie Parcel. The City received a grant for \$5.84 million to fund environmental review, project planning and design, and construction of the Paseo at the G2 parcel. The City will also be assisting in the site assessment and environmental review for the Paseo at the State-owned Bowtie Parcel.

The newly-constituted 100 Acre Partnership, made up of State Parks, the City, and the MRCA, will support efforts to complete, over time, the planning, remediation and development of all 100 acres of open and recreational space along the LA River at Taylor Yard. Along with implementation of the Paseo del Río Project, the 100 Acre Partnership is also committed to securing funding for much-needed improvements to sports fields and amenities at Río de Los Angeles State Park, with the active recreation amenities operated by the City's Recreation and Park Department.

Taylor Yard was previously a rail yard owned by Union Pacific Railroad. Part of the former rail yard is now divided into three open space parcels that total 100 acres and include the completed 40-acre Río de Los Angeles State Park, which opened in 2007, the 18-acre Bowtie parcel owned by State Parks, and the 42-acre G2 site owned by the City, with an easement owned by the MRCA.

The Paseo del Río project is anticipated to be the first of many projects at Taylor Yard undertaken by the Partnership. The Partnership partners signed a Letter of Intent in early 2020, outlining goals and expectations for working together to plan, coordinate, and deliver projects together; a formal MOU is now being drafted among the partners. The common goals of the partnership are included in the Letter of Intent, which is available on the partnership website: [www.100acrepartnership.org](http://www.100acrepartnership.org).

“Strong partnerships have always been the key to the Conservancy’s success,” said Irma Muñoz, chair of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC), and a member of the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority Board. “Teaming up with our partners maximizes resources, positions us to strengthen our community efforts, and brings clarity to all involved. Our focused goal is to provide the community with something that they have asked for; close access to nature, wildlife, and the beauty of the Los Angeles River. This, of course, will include the ability to sight a majestic osprey, hear the song of the rarely seen Least Bell’s Vireo, and even the croaking of our longtime last heard frogs.”

“It’s exciting to see these projects along the Los Angeles River move forward,” stated State Senator Maria Elena Durazo. “A total of 100 acres will be completely revitalized, giving residents access to the LA River and creating additional green space in their own back yard. I cannot wait for this project to be realized, adding to the ecological footprint of Los Angeles while providing green job opportunities for local residents.”

“Ensuring we provide safe green open spaces for Angelenos who live and work around the LA River is an important value driven goal that’s been years in the making,” said Assemblymember Wendy Carrillo. “Our community is worthy of a thriving and revitalized LA River, clean air, more trees, safe playgrounds for our children, and above all else, a state budget that reflects those values and funds projects that truly inspire environmental justice.”

“For over twenty years, California State Parks has been committed to sharing the State Parks mission and improving access to State Parks in urban Los Angeles,” said Craig Sap, Superintendent of the Angeles District. “Our success is largely attributable to innovative partnerships and intensive, community-driven planning efforts that we look forward to continuing through the 100 Acre Partnership.”

“As the City’s lead for the Paseo project, the Bureau of Engineering builds on 20 years of work with the community to revitalize the LA River,” said Gary Lee Moore, City Engineer. “Engineering’s commitment to delivering community-serving projects along the River includes parks, bikeways, greenways, stormwater capture facilities, and bridges, which are all part of the

comprehensive planning we have done for River revitalization. This new 100 Acre Partnership, and the State funding just approved for our first joint project at Taylor Yard, is crucial to continuing to realize the vision of a 51-mile, accessible River greenway.”

“This announcement is a wonderful commitment towards building a collaborative and connective LA River system”, said Michael Shull, General Manager of the City’s Department of Recreation & Parks. “The SMMC’s investment in the Paseo del Río will strengthen local, regional and state efforts to add precious open space, and will provide a new River-front amenity in the neighborhood.”

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#### **About California Department of Parks and Recreation**

Parks are essential to the well-being of environments, economies and all people. California’s state parks and the recreational programs supported by the California Department of Parks and Recreation and its divisions of Boating and Waterways, Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation, and Office of Historic Preservation, are gateways to these benefits and to opportunities to connect with families, friends, and communities. With 280 state park units, over 340 miles of coastline, 970 miles of lake and river frontage, 15,000 campsites, and 4,500 miles of trails, the department contains the largest and most diverse recreational, natural, and cultural heritage holdings of any state agency in the nation.

#### **About Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering**

The Bureau of Engineering is the City's lead agency for the planning, design and construction management of public buildings, infrastructure and open space projects. Projects include municipal buildings, such as police and fire stations, convention centers, and recreational and cultural facilities, as well as bridges, street and transit projects, and stormwater and wastewater systems. Open space projects include the development of parks and the restoration of wetlands. Engineering also manages permitting for construction in the public right-of-way, as well as the City's state-of-the-art online mapping system. BOE's projects are nationally-recognized in the areas of environmental sustainability and design and fully support the City's goals of creating a prosperous, livable and safe city for all residents and businesses. For more information, please visit <https://eng.lacity.org/>

#### **About Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority**

The MRCA is dedicated to the preservation and management of local open space and parkland, wildlife habitat, watershed lands, and trails in both wilderness and urban settings, and to ensuring public access to public parkland. The MRCA works in cooperation with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and other local government partners to acquire parkland, participate in vital planning processes, and complete major park improvement projects. The agency provides natural resources and scientific expertise, critical regional planning services, and education and leadership programs for thousands of youth each year. It is one of the lead agencies revitalizing the Los Angeles River and its tributaries.



Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority

