R1.06 San Gabriel River Watershed Management Plan Above Whittier Narrows

This planning study by the San Gabriel Mountains Regional Conservancy (SGMRC) is funded by Proposition 13. The project will develop land use-based recommendations that address water quality and supply, habitat, recreation and open space, and land and water stewardship opportunities. The "Think River! Youth Watershed Conference" is an outgrowth of this project. Within the Angeles National Forest, the focus will be on the heavily used areas of Highway 39 and the North and East Forks of the San Gabriel River. In the lower urbanized sub-watersheds of San Jose and Walnut Creeks, the focus will be on water quality, education, stewardship, habitat linkages and open space.

R1.07 San Gabriel Watershed Habitat Restoration Assessment Project

This study will augment the San Gabriel River Watershed Management Plan (R1.6) by mapping and assessing current habitat conditions in the San Gabriel River Watershed. It will also evaluate the opportunities and constraints for habitat restoration along urban corridors, undeveloped areas, and protected open spaces in a manner that will also protect other resources such as water quality. Attention will be given to potential wildlife corridor improvement opportunities and protection of regional species biodiversity.

3.6.2 Reach 2: San Gabriel Canyon

Location

The San Gabriel Canyon Reach is about 8 miles long. It begins where the main stem of the river joins the East Fork and turns south, and ends at the mouth of the canyon, 1.5 miles south of Morris Dam, just before entering Azusa. A natural flowing section of the river meanders between the San Gabriel Dam and the Morris Dam Reservoir.

Character

This is a breathtaking reach, still within the Angeles National Forest. Here, the river widens as it turns southward and travels down the dramatically steep San Gabriel Canyon. Two major flood control facilities, the San Gabriel and Morris Dams and Reservoirs, are key features of this stretch. The San Gabriel Dam backs sediments up into the East and West Forks—the original river bottom may be 100 feet or more beneath the decades of sediment build-up behind the reservoir.



Figure 3-19. The steep slopes of San Gabriel Canyon provide a dramatic backdrop to the meandering San Gabriel River.

Key Issues

The San Gabriel Canyon Reach has significant recreational potential, but that must be carefully balanced with fundamental flood protection, water supply and water quality functions that take place here.

Projects Overview

Five of the eight projects in this reach explore the recreational carrying capacity of the river, particularly as they relate to water. The projects determine whether and where river water might be used for recreational pursuits, how to protect water quality where visitor access is deemed feasible, and whether to add water to create year-round flows adequate for supporting fish habitat. These projects could add 40 acres of park and open space and 2 miles of additional trails. (See Map 3-3 for locations of Reach 2 projects.)

R2.01 Black-Fly Vector Research

On behalf of the Fly Fishers Club of Orange County, a funded research study conducted by consultants of the San Gabriel Mountains Regional Conservancy is evaluating the river's black fly populations, a source of fish food. Fluctuations in black fly populations have implications for stream ecology, interdependent organisms, bio-indicators, as well as human health and vector control methods.

R2.02 San Gabriel Reservoir Recreational Study

This 1992 DPW study investigated expanding non-water oriented recreational activities at or near the reservoir. Its recommendations need to be updated in light of today's increased security considerations.

R2.03 Highway 39/San Gabriel River Recreation Needs Assessment

The SGMRC is developing a proposal to address issues relating to high usage along the Highway 39 area of the river, for a Proposition 13 Nonpoint Source Pollution grant. A significant amount of trash has accumulated in the river and along Highway 39. Toilet facilities are insufficient for the thousands of visitors, and more parking, trash and ash receptacles, and information/interpretive kiosks are needed. A needs assessment study will explore current recreational usage and needs, as well as potential impacts on habitat and water quality.



Figure 3-20. Lack of visitor facilities and amenities are serious issues for visitors to the Angeles National Forest.

R2.04 Sediment Management Plan (San Gabriel Canyon)

A current DPW study explores options for removing sediment that has accumulated behind both the San Gabriel Dam and the Morris Dam. In the wake of the 2002 Curve and Williams Fires, DPW is planning to undertake a 5-million cubic yard emergency clean out of San Gabriel Reservoir, which is anticipated to start in 2004 and last for several years.



Map 3-3. Master Plan Projects: Reach 2.

R2.05 Float Tubing and Fishing Study

The FFCOC proposed this study to investigate providing seasonal access to the Morris and San Gabriel Reservoirs for fishing and other low-impact recreational activities, including allowing float tubes and non-motorized boats onto the waters and shoreline of these two water bodies. The study will address concerns about providing increased public access to a major source of public drinking water and safety and liability issues. The outcome of the study will determine potential project feasibility.

R2.06 Morris Dam Peninsula Park

The largest available open space along the national forest section of the river, this 40-acre peninsula juts into the Morris reservoir at the former site of a Navy torpedo testing facility adjacent to Highway 39. It can be reclaimed and developed for recreational day-use, over-night camping, trails and an interpretive center for the national forest, including a historic military interpretive site. The development of this park would provide additional needed park facilities with parking and other site amenities to relieve the serious weekend congestion of Angeles National Forest visitors.



Figure 3-21. The U.S. Navy tested over 50 types of torpedoes and bombs in the Morris Dan Reservoir during World War 11.

R2.07 Flow Study Below Morris Dam

The FFCOC proposed this study to explore the feasibility of providing a minimal water flow year-round below Morris Dam for possible fishing in the river. The study will examine sending minimum flows from Morris Dam, augmented by delivery of water from the Metropolitan Water District, into the stream below Morris Dam. Year-round flow would enhance riparian habitat and support Azusa river projects that lie just downstream of Morris Dam. Water for the Committee of Nine is currently piped through the canyon to the San Gabriel Canyon Spreading Grounds, bypassing the San Gabriel River. However, this Azusa Conduit is a very old facility and may not be operational because of a collapse in a reach near the San Gabriel Dam. The initial study commissioned by FFCOC is in final draft form and is available for review. It recommends additional evaluation of dam operations (both San Gabriel and Morris) to determine how best to achieve the project objective. The study does not resolve whether the operations of these two dams are in compliance with State regulations concerning flows allowing the passage of fish. The outcome of the study will determine whether further project development is feasible.

R2.08 Old San Gabriel Canyon Road

This 2-mile County service road extends south from Morris Dam at a pump station down to Azusa by the El Encanto Restaurant. A City of Azusa project, this road can provide river access for hikers and bikers and could also be linked to the nearby San Gabriel River Bike Trail via the Canyon Inn and El Encanto properties. A safe crossing of Highway 39 is needed.

3.6.3 Reach 3: Upper San Gabriel Valley

Location

The Upper San Gabriel Valley Reach extends seven miles from the mouth of the San Gabriel River Canyon above Azusa, south to the Santa Fe Dam in Irwindale.

Character

This complex, tenuous urban/wildland interface features large remnants of natural wilderness that commingle with residential, gravel mining and industrial land uses. The mouth of the canyon opens up to the broad alluvial plains of the Upper San Gabriel Valley in Azusa as the river leaves the mountains. This reach lies above the San Gabriel Basin, which begins at the base of the impermeable bedrock layers of the mountains. The reach



Figure 3–22. The river flows through a natural floodplain in this area.

has very deep alluvial deposits, offering some of the most productive recharge opportunities in the river system. The river itself is mainly in a natural state with sandbars and riparian and alluvial fan sage scrub habitat. However, the soft-bottomed channel is confined to engineered levees and check dams crossing the river at regular intervals. The Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area is a large open space with stands of alluvial fan sage scrub.

Key Issues

This "edge zone" is in a period of transition. Over the coming decades, quarry sites and other industrial uses will gradually phase out, creating significant restoration opportunities for parks, trails and habitat, as well as economic development opportunities. Land acquisition for open space protection of remaining undeveloped lands is a long-term strategy. In the short-term, more readily available river access can be provided, while also

retaining all-important flood prevention and water conservation functions. Access to in-mountain creek trails is difficult.

Projects Overview

More than half of the 29 projects proposed for this reach are trails or similar projects that can reconnect people to the nearby, but inaccessible, river. Other projects aim to create new parks and open space that restore natural beauty to the area and provide habitat. New and re-opened interpretive centers will help explain the area's natural and cultural significance. (See Map 3-4 for locations of Reach 3 projects.)

R3.01 Azusa Canyon River Park

This City of Azusa project aims to acquire land to develop a river-focused park at the southern end of San Gabriel Canyon. It includes a visitor's center surrounded by a native plant garden, interpretive signage, restored habitat areas, and paths leading down to the river. Landscaping, picnic tables and a small play area will encourage national forest users to visit. Camping in a natural park area will be available. The City of Azusa has already acquired part of the park. This park is adjacent to the Rainbow Canyon Equestrian Center.

R3.02 San Gabriel River Bike Trail Extension

This project will extend the 38-mile regional bike trail from its current terminus near the southern edge of San Gabriel Canyon by the proposed Interpretive Center, to the proposed Azusa Canyon River Park and eventually all the way to Angeles National Forest. A one-mile extension is being built to the Mountain Cove development, near the mouth of the San Gabriel Canyon

R3.03 Robert's Creek Trail Access

Public access to Robert's Creek will be provided through Mountain Cove private residential development, from Azusa Canyon River Park and/or the San Gabriel River Bike Trail Extension.

R3.04 Robert's Creek Restoration

This will be a habitat restoration and park expansion in the canyon area behind Mountain Cove.

R3.05 Westside Trail

A new, multi-purpose trail at the far edge of the flood plain, running parallel to the San Gabriel River on its west side and opposite to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail will be developed. This one-mile trail will run along the San Gabriel Valley Gun Club and provide a connection between the Roberts Creek and Fish Creek Trails.

R3.06 Forest Gateway Interpretive Center

This project will create a new USDA Forest Service Ranger Station and Interpretive Center at the entrance to Azusa Canyon. Diverse educational opportunities will provide information about the canyon, the national forest and native habitat. "Green" building practices and watershed sensitive design principles will be incorporated into the site. North East Trees has already developed the building and site designs for this open space area. The project is currently funded and will be built in 2004.

R3.07 Glendora Ridge Road Trail Access

Public access for pedestrians and bicycles to the existing fire road through the mountains on the south side of the canyon will be provided, either by an access easement through private property, or by creating a new access point. This road leads to Mount Baldy.

R3.08 San Gabriel Canyon Spreading Grounds (Concept Design Study, see Section 3.8.1)

This project will study possibilities for providing landscaping, native habitat restoration, decorative fencing, interpretive signage, trails and other park amenities for public enjoyment and education at two deep spreading basins adjacent to the San Gabriel River. The 165-acre site project will be compatible with the groundwater recharge function of the two basins. Due to the deepness of the two basins, and the fact that it is a major water supply for Azusa, health and safety issues will be key project determinants.

R3.09 Future Pedestrian Bridge

The City of Azusa has indicated to Vulcan Materials Company (Vulcan) that it would like to investigate the use of the existing conveyor belt that traverses across the San Gabriel River as a potential bicycle and pedestrian bridge (about 30 years from now after mining operations cease). Although Vulcan does not have any objections to using this bridge when mining is completed, it has not yet engaged in negotiations with the City to discuss potential liability and cost for converting the conveyor crossing to a bicycle and/or pedestrian bridge.

R3.10 West Riverbank Tree Planting Project at the San Gabriel Valley Gun Club

The San Gabriel Valley Gun Club has proposed planting 200+ trees on the west levee of the San Gabriel River, beside its facilities on land it leases

from Vulcan. The Gun Club serves over 100,000 people each year, including recreationists and training organizations such as law enforcement. The trees will provide much needed shade along the river and dampen the sounds that currently echo up the canyon from Gun Club activities. The City of Azusa, representatives of Vulcan and representatives from the San Gabriel Valley Gun Club are in negotiations to mitigate noise emanating from the Club into residential areas. Vulcan has not included these trees as potential mitigation to noise impacts.

R3.11 Azusa Rock Quarry Restoration

Vulcan is currently pursuing a revised reclamation plan for the Azusa Rock Quarry to rehabilitate and restore the area when mining is complete. The existing reclamation plan is subject to negotiations between Vulcan and the City of Azusa. A revised reclamation plan would change the quality of reclamation that currently exists at this quarry site.

R3.12 Fish Creek Restoration and Public Access

Vulcan is currently working with the City of Duarte on (and discussing with the City of Azusa), limited public access through the Azusa Rock Quarry along Fish Creek. For safety and liability reasons, Vulcan will limit access to daylight hours and non-operational hours of the quarry, probably on weekends and holidays. These discussions are ongoing; an agreement has not been reached as of this writing. After mining is complete at the Azusa Rock Quarry site, and with Vulcan's permission, it may be possible to daylight and restore the stream and provide fuller public access through the quarry site.

R3.13 Todd Avenue Bike Trail Connection

This project will connect an existing City of Azusa bike path at the south end of the spreading grounds with the San Gabriel River Bike Trail. The project will provide the local community with a much needed access point to the River Trail.

R3.14 Azusa Bike Trail Network

This project will develop a system of street-side bicycle paths to help bicyclists enter Azusa Canyon from Sierra Madre Avenue or Azusa Canyon Road and connect to the San Gabriel River Trail.

R3.15 Pacific Electric Rails-to-Trails Project

A proposed multi-city project will create an east-west bike trail on an abandoned rail line running parallel to Foothill Boulevard between

Monrovia in the west and Claremont in the east. The proposed bike trail design will need to take into account a potential light rail line which is being considered for this route. This trail may integrate with the Duarte Bike Trail, crossing the San Gabriel River at the Puente-Largo Bridge.

R3.16 Azusa-Largo Quarry

This quarry operation, located north of Foothill Boulevard, houses the current aggregate production facility of Vulcan, as well as shop facilities and asphalt plant production facilities. The plant at the Azusa-Largo Quarry produces material from the area in which it exists, as well as material that is transported via a conveyor system from Azusa Rock Quarry. The operation will supply aggregate, construction grade materials as well as asphalt materials for over 40 years. The eventual land use post-mining will be determined later in negotiations between the City of Irwindale and Vulcan.

R3.17 Reliance #2 Quarry

This is an existing landfill operated by Vulcan at a site located south of Foothill Boulevard bordered by The Foothill Freeway (I-210), and bordered on the east by Irwindale Avenue. This operation is currently being used for silt deposition from the existing Reliance Plant and operates as a landfill facility that can ultimately be filled and used for some commercial activity. It is subject to negotiation between the City of Irwindale and Vulcan to



Figure 3-23. The historic Puente Largo Bridge is part of the proposed Duarte Bike Trail extension.

determine potential land use and other issues. The time to complete the landfill is not known at this time.

R3.18 Wright-Romvary Properties

The City of Duarte plans to acquire a total of 365 acres of land for open space protection, trails and habitat restoration. The property is adjacent to Van Tassel Creek, a tributary of the San Gabriel River. This project is dependent on funding availability.

R3.19 Duarte Bike Trail Extension

This project will extend and improve an existing 1.5-mile multi-use trail for an additional mile from Royal Oaks Park in the City of Duarte across the historic Puente Largo Rail Bridge to San Gabriel River Bike Trail in Azusa. Improvements will create a safer connection and will include signage, paint lines, lighting, and pavement resurfacing.

R3.20 Route 66/Foothill Boulevard Gateway

This future City of Duarte gateway project, in partnership with the City of Azusa, is located on the historic Route 66 Highway.

R3.21 Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area and Habitat Enhancements

The County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (LADPR) plans improvements to habitat areas and trails, including the protection and restoration of remnant alluvial fan sage scrub plant communities by replanting native plants and removing exotics. Other improvements include improving access to the Park's bicycle path by establishing safe crossings and directional signage.

R3.22 Peter Schabarum Nature Center

A recently re-opened nature center operated by the SGMRC in partnership with Los Angeles County, provides interpretive trails, habitat restoration, a native plant demonstration garden, outdoor amenities improvements and possible camping, as well as community education and outreach programs. Project sponsors are seeking outreach partners for docent and interpretive programs.

R3.23 United Rock Products Quarry #4

This is currently the processing plant for United Rock Products. Material mined in Quarry #2 and Quarry #3 are processed on the site. Additionally, this site has two asphalt plants, two ready mix concrete plants, and equipment shops. United Rock Products and the City of Irwindale are negotiating the mining and reclamation options for this site.



Figure 3–24. The Peter Schabarum Nature Center provides a venue for school groups and interpretive presentations.

R3.24 Buena Vista Wetlands

This project will create bio-engineered wetlands for habitat restoration in a DPW spreading basin west of Santa Fe Dam. A conveyor line, operated by United Rock Products, runs across the westerly part of this property. The line has been in operation since 1983 and is scheduled to be in use until circa 2035. The design and implementation of the wetlands will need to ensure the continued safe operation of this conveyor.

R3.25 United Rock Products Quarry #3

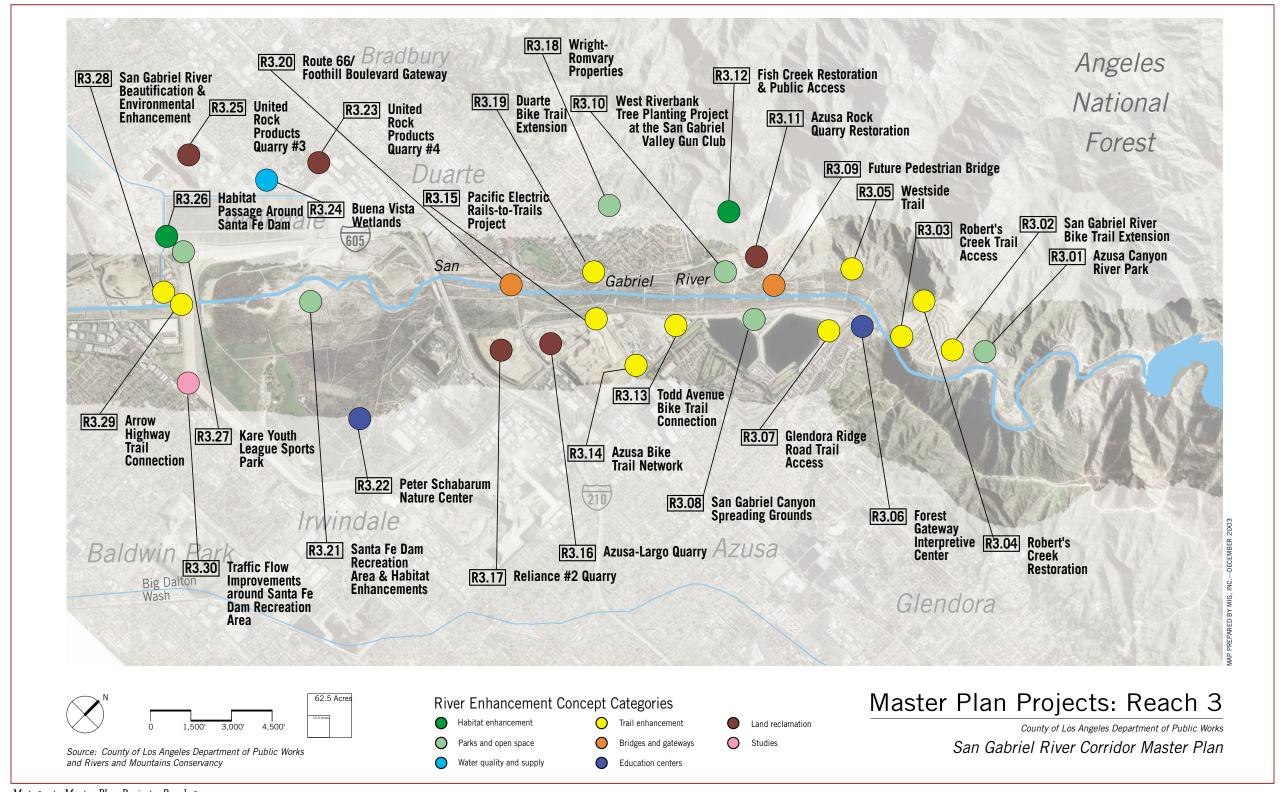
This is an active quarry that will be in operation until 2035. United Rock Products and the City of Irwindale are in negotiations for the reclamation of this site, which is scheduled to be completed in 2061.

R3.26 Habitat Passage around Santa Fe Dam

This project will provide a habitat linkage at this "pinchpoint" to complete the Puente Hills to San Gabriel Mountains habitat corridor. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) owns key parcels in this area. ACE is willing to partner with other agencies and private groups to identify opportunities for creating this linkage.

R3.27 Kare Youth League Sports Park

This under-used open space area is at the base of the Santa Fe Dam, above Arrow Highway. It is owned by ACE. Kare Youth League is a



Map 3-4. Master Plan Projects: Reach 3.

potential lessee, that would build a soccer field with some amenities on existing disturbed paved areas. There is an existing habitat on the property that could be restored as part of the habitat corridor. There will be a trail linkage to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail.

R3.28 San Gabriel River Beautification and Environmental Enhancement

An environmental beautification opportunity for the City of Irwindale in partnership with the Hollywood Beautification Team, this 1.4-mile enhancement of the existing bike trail would including a bike staging area and other improvements designed to provide a better interface between the Santa Fe Dam and the San Gabriel River Bike Trail. The project includes landscaping, drought-tolerant trees, irrigation, signage and other amenities.

R3.29 Arrow Highway Trail Connection

Bike trail users need a safer passage across Arrow Highway. An assessment on best connection needs to be made. Alternatives include building a new bridge over Arrow Highway, or going underneath through an existing tunnel, which also needs drainage repairs.

R3.30 Traffic Flow Improvements Around Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area

The DPW proposed this study of vehicular traffic circulation patterns to identify improvements that will enhance public safety and improve pedestrian and bicycle access near the Santa Fe Dam.

3.6.4 Reach 4: Lower San Gabriel Valley

Location

This 8.5-mile reach extends from the Santa Fe Dam to the Whittier Narrows Dam. The "Whittier Narrows" is a natural gap in the hills that divides the Main San Gabriel Basin from the Central Basin to the south, and forms the southern boundary of the San Gabriel Valley, the Puente Hills to the east and the Montebello Hills to the west. The San Gabriel River passes through this gap as it flows south.

Character

This is a densely developed area within the San Gabriel Valley. Because there are extensive river deposits in the upper portion of the reach, major sand and gravel mining still occurs in this area. Most of the reach lies over the lower Main San Gabriel Basin, the primary source of water for the San Gabriel Valley. This basin contains contaminated plumes traveling



Figure 3-25. Although confined to engineered levees, the river still flows through a habitat-rich environment.

southwards toward the Central Basin. These plumes are toxins that have percolated into the groundwater aquifer from decades of industrial waste dumping in the San Gabriel Valley. The river itself is soft-bottom, and runs through a wide channel contained by levees. ACE owns and maintains this stretch. Whittier Narrow Recreation Area is a 1,400-acre open space area with flood protection, habitat and recreational land uses.

Key Issues

Many of the densely developed communities along this stretch of the river need more parks and open space, but lack easy access to the river. Often development is right to the river's edge. Some industrial sites are becoming available to be reclaimed for recreation and habitat, as well as for new economic development that can be designed to take advantage of the river's proximity. This gradual "greening" of the river can add water where needed to recreate attractive natural landscapes that also provide important habitat connections.

Projects Overview

If implemented, these 31 projects will significantly transform and enhance the character of the river along this reach. Many projects are designed to provide people with easier access to the river, while other land reclamation and water conservation projects ensure they will find a more aesthetically appealing environment once they enter the area. The new parks and open space areas will complement other projects that are designed to provide habitat enhancement and connectivity from the Puente Hills to the San Gabriel Mountains. (See Map 3-5 for locations of Reach 4 projects.)

R4.01 United Rock Products Quarry #1

United Rock Products Quarry #1 is currently being reclaimed, according to agreements with the City of Irwindale. The property will be returned to a condition suitable for development. The anticipated completion is 2020.

R4.02 United Rock Products Quarry #2

United Rock Products Quarry #2 is currently being mined. United Rock and the City of Irwindale are negotiating the details of the mining and reclamation options. Mining operations are expected to cease by 2061.

R4.03 Bubalo Quarry

A reclamation plan for this quarry is in progress.

R4.04 Quarry Reclamation/Water Storage/Recreational Facilities Development Study

The Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District, Sierra Club, and the State of California Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) initiated a study to identify potential reuse of gravel quarries for multiple purposes after mining is completed, including stormwater capture and cleanup, recharge of stormwater and imported water, flood reduction, recreation and habitat restoration, as well as aesthetic improvements. The study will require several years to conduct and has not reached any conclusions. A separate community forum has been proposed to provide study participants with essential mining community input. Implementing this study under the San Gabriel River Master Plan will require further environmental review beyond the scope of this Master Plan and EIR.

R4.05 Hanson Quarry

The City of Irwindale is interested in multiple possible uses for the 400 acre Hanson Quarry site, which offers a significant economic development opportunity. A long-term quarry reclamation plan is being developed to be implemented once mining operations have ceased, including new business and industrial uses, shopping, parks and open space, and possibly groundwater recharge and cleanup.



Figure 3-26. The Hanson Quarry is one of the largest mining operations along the river.

R4.06 Rodefer Quarry

This privately-owned quarry is an inholding of the City of Arcadia and is currently being filled with inert materials such as dirt and concrete. It is now zoned for industrial land use. Future reclamation plans could include park and open space, and other uses.

R4.07 Durbin Quarry

The City of Irwindale is interested in multiple uses for the Durbin Quarry site, which offers a significant economic development opportunity. It is developing a long-term quarry reclamation plan for reclamation after mining is complete, including new business and industrial uses, shopping, parks and open space, and possibly groundwater recharge and cleanup. However, the Durbin Quarry, owned and operated by Vulcan, will be an ongoing mining operation for the next 30 to 40 years. The City of Irwindale is keenly interested in its potential for economic development and is now negotiating with Vulcan about final reclamation and landform. Development would occur significantly after mining operations cease because of extensive fill requirements.

R4.08 Ramona Boulevard Gateway

The Ramona Boulevard gateway project will provide a key entry point to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail and the City of El Monte.

R4.09 Caltrans Right-of-Way Open Space and Trail

This Baldwin Park project will upgrade an existing 2-acre right-of-way with landscaping and trails to connect Barnes Park, the San Gabriel River Bike Trail, and neighborhood schools.

R4.10 Barnes Park

Baldwin Park plans to improve the existing Barnes Park with habitat enhancements and an interpretive programs center.

R4.11 Walnut Creek Nature Park and Nature Center

Baldwin Park will improve the Walnut Creek Park with a 3,300 square foot community center, walking trails, spray pool, playgrounds, new turf, fencing and irrigation.

R4.12 Durfee School Recreation Area

The City of El Monte wants to develop active recreation and landscaping along the San Gabriel River and provide access to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail.

R4.13 Valley Boulevard Gateway

This City of El Monte project will improve connections from Mountain View High School and surrounding neighborhoods to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail. The project includes entry signage.

R4.14 Inflatable Rubber Dams

DPW is building two new inflatable rubber dams over existing drop structures in the river. The dams provide temporary water storage and also create rich and attractive natural habitat.

R4.15 Woodland Duck Farm (Concept Design Study; see Section 3.8.2)

A former duck farm facility, this 57-acre site will be redesigned to create a more natural environment and recreational experience more directly connected to the San Gabriel River. It will increase public open space, provide trails and potentially treat urban runoff. The RMC has acquired the land; an existing house will become RMC headquarters. There is also an equestrian center on the site operated by the Rio Trust.

R4.16 San Gabriel River Bike Trail Bridge

DPW is studying possibilities for a multi-use bridge to connect El Monte, South El Monte, and unincorporated LA County communities with the San Gabriel River Trail, the San Jose Creek Trail and the Duck Farm.



Figure 3-27. San Jose Creek is a major tributary of the San Gabriel River, offering trail and habitat connections.

R4.17 San Jose Creek Bike Trail Bridge

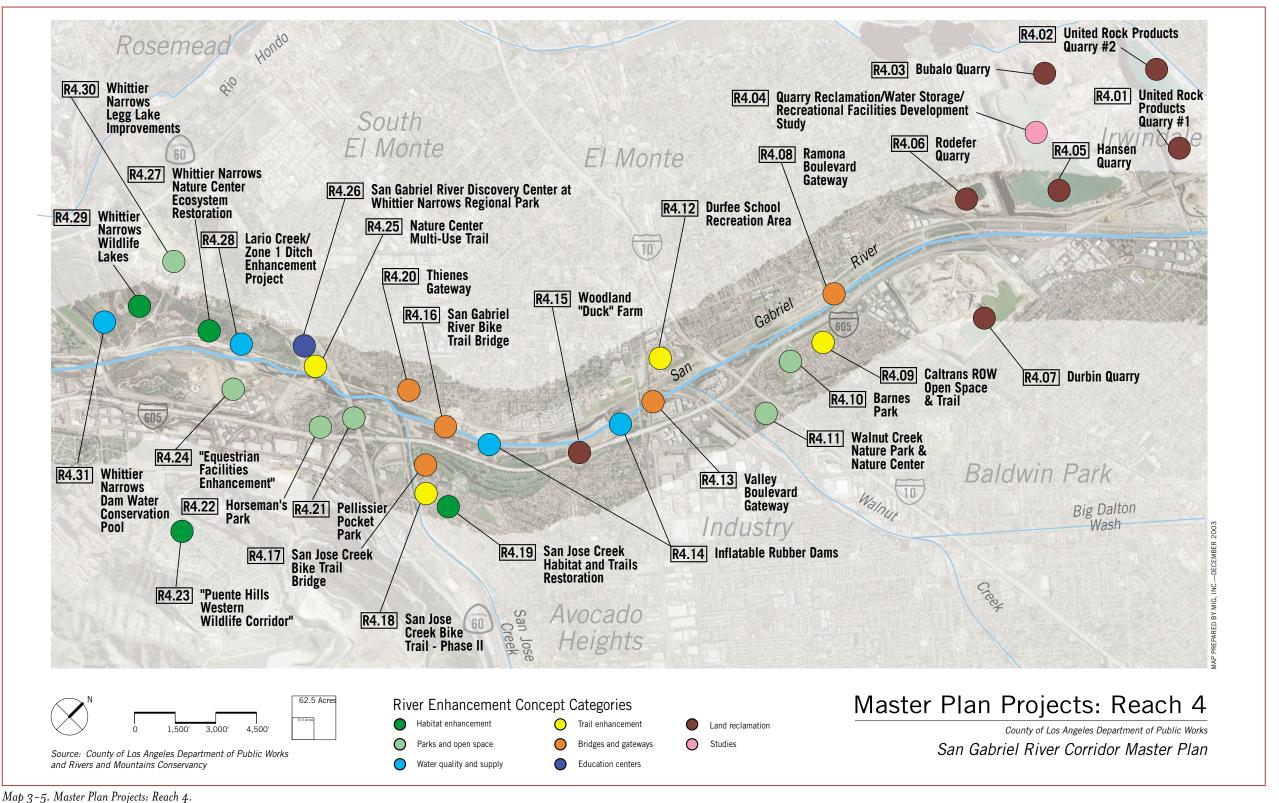
This multi-use bridge would be part of a project to expand the San Jose Creek Bike Trail system. The bridge would connect bicyclists and pedestrians from the south bank of San Jose Creek with the north bank and the San Gabriel River Bike Trail.

R4.18 San Jose Creek Bike Trail Phase II

DPW is studying potential expansion of the existing San Jose Creek Bike Trail, beginning along the southern bank of the creek from the San Gabriel River traveling east to Cal Poly Pomona and to Claremont along Thompson's Creek (a San Jose Creek tributary).

R4.19 San Jose Creek Habitat and Trails Restoration

North East Trees, with funding from Los Angeles County Open Space District, is restoring native plants along the northern slopes of San Jose Creek. The project area includes a 1.5-mile stretch of creek and trails, starting at the San Gabriel River past Workman Mill Road Bridge. The project includes landscaping to enhance the equestrian trail on the north and south bank and removal of exotic arundo in the creek.



R4.20 Thienes Gateway

This gateway is an equestrian staging area and local access point to the equestrian trails along the west bank of the river. Improvements by the Hollywood Beautification Team and Friends of the San Gabriel River, with funding from the Los Angeles County Open Space District, include an artful gate by a local artist, horse tie posts, drinking water, signage, seating and native landscaping including trees.

R4.21 Pellesier Pocket Park

The current owner and developer of an adjacent site would like to develop this property as a pocket park for recreational use, including a bench and hitching post for equestrians. The project can proceed if an organizational entity can be found to assume long-term maintenance and operations.

R4.22 Horseman's Park

This project includes landscaping and a gateway to improve connections between surrounding neighborhoods and Horseman's Park.

R4.23 Puente Hills Western Wildlife Corridor

This project will create a habitat movement corridor between the Puente-Chino Hills and Whittier Narrows, either near Rose Hills Cemetery along Sycamore Canyon, or down the north slope towards San Jose Creek. A connection to the San Gabriel Mountains may eventually become possible.

R4.24 Equestrian Facilities Enhancement

Potential upgrades and water quality runoff mitigation measures will be considered for these existing equestrian facilities.

R4.25 Nature Center Multi-Use Trail

A trail connection between the San Gabriel River Discovery Center at Whittier Narrows and the San Gabriel River Bike Trail will improve user access, safety and convenience. New signage to and from the River Discovery Center will enhance existing unmarked paths.

R4.26 San Gabriel River Discovery Center at Whittier Narrows Regional Park (Concept Design Study; see Section 3.8.3)

LADPR, RMC, and the Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District are jointly developing a new regional indoor/outdoor museum and conference center on the site of the existing Whittier Narrows Nature Center. It will focus on watershed and water-related topics, historical information and wildlife education. The project's innovative building design will demonstrate green building technologies and watershed-appropriate site development.

R4.27 Whittier Narrows Nature Center Ecosystem

This project, supported by LADPR, has been in development for six years, based on a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project options study. Because the project is located at the northern most boundary of the Montebello Forebay, this area is subject to rising waters, and therefore is not a good site for groundwater recharge. The selected option is to build a .25-acre pond, line two lakes to reduce water loss from percolation, remove invasive plants, and restore native vegetation. The lakes could be interconnected to Lario Creek (see R4.28) and water in the lakes could flow through the system and down to the Rio Hondo Spreading Grounds. The volume of water required to maintain the lakes is minimal compared with the tens of thousands of acre feet that flow through the system annually.

R4.28 Lario Creek/Zone 1 Ditch (Concept Design Study, see Section 3.8.4)

This project is an opportunity to build upon and enhance an already planned DPW project to expand the flow capacity of an existing canal. North East Trees proposes to temporarily divert high water flows to protect and extend wetlands. This will restore valuable habitat to support wildlife and increase the aesthetic and educational value of the area, which is adjacent to the San Gabriel River Discovery Center.

R4.29 Whittier Narrows Wildlife Lakes

LADPR believes it is important to preserve these two large lakes as wetlands. The lakes, located at the Nature Center, should be lined to reduce water percolation.

R4.30 Whittier Narrows Legg Lakes Improvements

These three recreational lakes should be upgraded to improve ADA accessibility and reduce erosion.

R4.31 Whittier Narrows Dam Water Conservation Pool

The Los Angeles ACE office completed a feasibility study to expand the current water conservation pool behind the Whittier Narrow Dam from 2,500-acre feet at elevation 201.6 feet up to as high as elevation 209 feet. The pool, to be built by the Water Replenishment District (WRD), will increase groundwater percolation for increased water supply; it is expected to save the WRD \$1million annually. The ACE regional headquarters in



Figure 3-28. Legg Lake is a popular family picnic destination.

San Francisco is currently reviewing the study. The project will affect other projects proposed within the Whittier Narrows flood control basin. Opportunities to integrate recreational and habitat uses in the design of the ponding area should be explored.

3.6.5 Reach 5: Upper Coastal Plain

Location

This seven-mile reach begins at the outlet of the Whittier Narrows Dam and ends where the San Gabriel River crosses Firestone Boulevard in Norwalk, near the I-605 Freeway (San Gabriel Freeway).

Character

The San Gabriel River emerges from the Montebello and Puente-Chino Hills and enters a more gently sloping landscape. Confined by engineered levees and rip-rap, the river remains a soft-bottom channel but is narrower along this stretch than above Whittier Narrows. The river flows above the Central Basin, the most productive recharge area. Two of the largest and most productive spreading grounds in Los Angeles County lie just west of the river. Adjacent cities are densely developed with large areas of industrial use.



Figure 3-29. The river is soft bottomed in Reach 5.

Key Issues

With the exception of the nearby spreading grounds, there are few large areas of open land available for parks and open space.

Projects Overview

Six of the 18 projects in this reach are new or improved parks. The remaining projects involve three new trails, and seven river gateways. Two of the largest new parks are possible because undeveloped land surrounding the nearby spreading grounds is available. (See Map 3-6 for locations of Reach 5 projects.)

R5.01 Pico Rivera Golf Course

This proposed golf course would replace an old campground south of the Pico Rivera Sports Arena. An environmentally-friendly "green" golf course design will be needed to address water quality issues. The design suggests at least three holes in the riverbed.

R5.02 Pegasus Ranch Park

This proposed park adjacent to the river is on the site of a former equestrian facility, on land leased from Southern California Edison. It is an opportunity for both habitat restoration and low-impact recreation.

R5.03 Beverly Boulevard Gateway

This gateway provides a key entry point from the City of Pico Rivera to the river and the Regional Bike Trail.

R5.04 Amigo Park Improvements

LADPR would like to revitalize Amigo Park, adjacent to the east bank of the river. Providing access from the park to the river may provide more opportunities for the community to exercise safely. Planting native trees would improve the area's appearance and contribute to wildlife habitat. Landscaping, directional signage and more amenities will also enhance safety, security and enjoyment of the park.

R5.05 Whittier Greenway Trail and Connection

The City of Whittier recently built a 5-mile bike trail along an abandoned railroad right-of-way, which added 38 acres of linear open space to the City. Another extension is needed to connect it to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail. Whittier is studying four possible routes, including one to Pio Pico State Historic Park. When fully completed, the bike trail will extend from the river to the City of Brea in Orange County. This trail is part of the MTA Regional Bike Plan.

R5.06 Pio Pico State Historic Park

Pio Pico was the last Governor of Mexican California. His historic Pio Pico Mansion was recently renovated and re-opened in September 2003. A new watershed enhancement project at this site will include a watershed interpretive exhibit and native, drought-tolerant landscaping. The project will open a pedestrian and bicycle access way under the existing rail line, between the park and the east side of the river. At present, the levy/rail line completely blocks the view of the river. A viewing platform may be constructed over the river, allowing people to take in the view without standing in the bike path.

R5.07 Whittier Boulevard Gateway

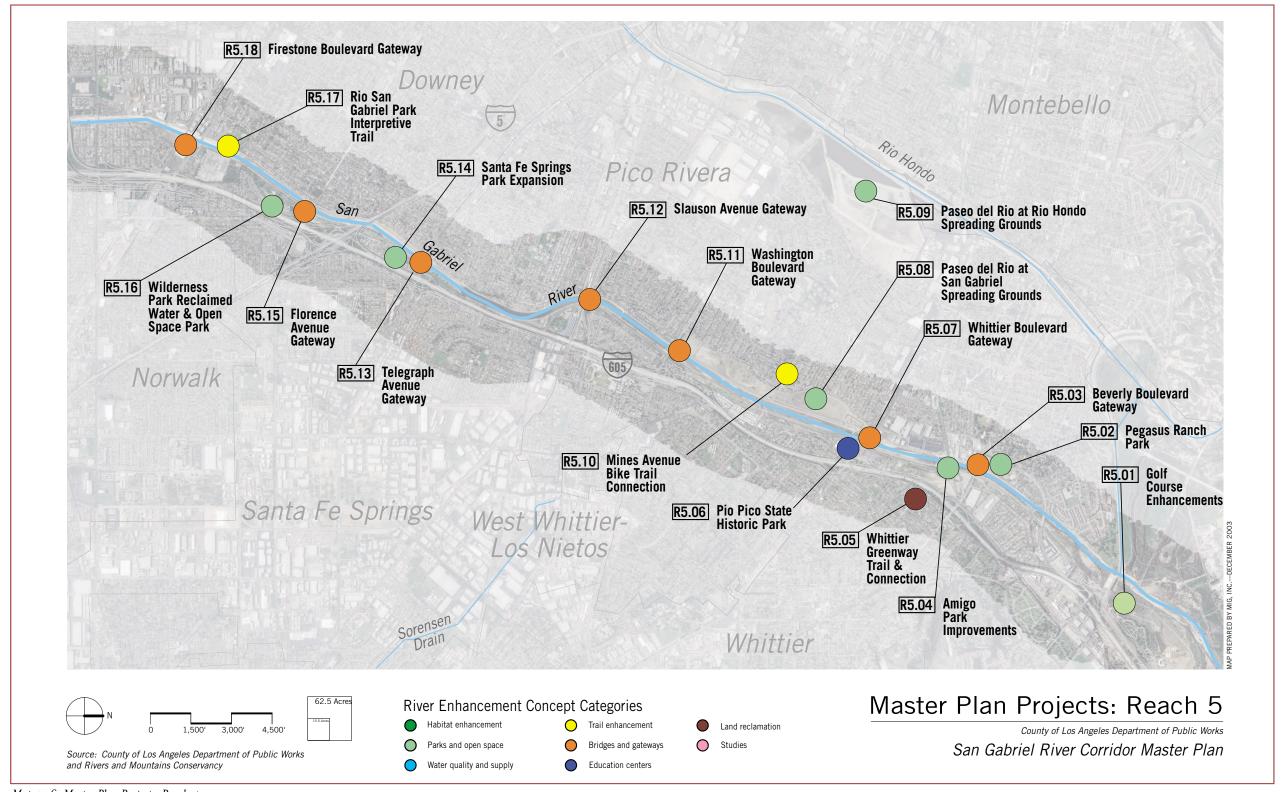
A new gateway for the Cities of Whittier and Pico Rivera at the San Gabriel River would be designed to help enhance the image of the western portions of the two cities. The current "Gateway District" for Whittier is 2 miles east of the river. Possible partners include the California State Department of Parks and Recreation, LA County, and Caltrans.



Figure 3-30. Visitors to Pio Pico State Historic Park are often not aware how close they are to the San Gabriel River.



Figure 3-31. The newly renovated Pio Pico Adobe at the Historic Park is one of the many cultural and historic facilities in close proximity to the San Gabriel River trail.



Map 3-6. Master Plan Projects: Reach 5.

R5.08 Paseo del Rio at San Gabriel Spreading Grounds

This multi-objective 128-acre DPW project will provide a bike trail, new native and drought-tolerant landscaping, shade structures and other park-like amenities to beautify open space surrounding the existing spreading grounds. The occasional presence of surface water creates the appearance of a lake to be enjoyed by nearby residents and other visitors. The project entails limited public access, with passive recreational and educational opportunities.

R5.09 Paseo del Rio at Rio Hondo Spreading Grounds

This multi-objective 570-acre DPW project will provide a bike trail, new native and drought-tolerant landscaping, shade structures and other park-like amenities to beautify open space surrounding the existing spreading grounds. The occasional presence of surface water creates the appearance of a lake to be enjoyed by nearby residents and other visitors. The project entails limited public access, with passive recreational and educational opportunities.

R5.10 Mines Avenue Bike Trail Connection

This City of Pico Rivera bike trail will provide a two-mile connection from the Rio Hondo Spreading Grounds east to the San Gabriel Spreading Grounds and from there to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail. This will be a



Figure 3-32. Picnic shelter at Rio Hondo Spreading Grounds provides a compatible recreational use.

conversion from a Class 2 bike trail to a Class 1, separating the trail from automobile traffic for increased safety.

R5.11 Washington Boulevard Gateway

This project will provide a key entry point to the river and the Regional Bike Trail from the City of Pico Rivera.

R5.12 Slauson Avenue Gateway

The Slauson Avenue Gateway will serve as a key entry point to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail from the City of Pico Rivera.

R5.13 Telegraph Road Gateway

This gateway will improve access to the Santa Fe Springs Park Expansion project from the Cities of Pico Rivera and Santa Fe Springs (see project R5.14).

R5.14 Santa Fe Springs Park Expansion

The existing 14-acre park across Telegraph Road will be expanded, with the south side for active recreational users and the north for passive recreation and habitat. The expanded north half is a proposed 13-acre Nature Sanctuary. The project will connect the San Gabriel River Bike Trail with a pedestrian-oriented zone on Telegraph Avenue, and include gateway entry features, native vegetation and potential stormwater management practices.

R5.15 Florence Avenue Gateway

In conjunction with Wilderness Park, this project will connect the San Gabriel River Bike Trail and the City of Downey.

R5.16 Wilderness Park Reclaimed Water and Open Space

This 26-acre park in the City of Downey offers varied recreational activities for residents throughout Southeast LA County. The park has a large lake of reclaimed water, which is often used for fishing derbies. A reclaimed water project will connect the lake to the park's irrigation system, reducing the need for chemical treatment of lake water and providing a migrating rest area for birds. Another project will develop six acres of land for passive recreation, using native plants. The City of Downey holds a long-term lease from Southern California Edison (SCE), which currently owns the land.

R5.17 Rio San Gabriel Park Interpretive Trail

This existing 16-acre park adjacent to the river combines high- and lowimpact recreational activities with one building for meetings and special



Figure 3-33. Parks along the river often include heavily used playgrounds such as this one at Santa Fe Springs Park.

indoor activities. The City of Downy plans to develop a native plant interpretative trail around the perimeter of the park, beginning at the river's edge. The project will include a trail made of decomposed granite, benches, trash receptacles, signage, restrooms and a picnic shelter.

R5.18 Firestone Boulevard Gateway

The Firestone Boulevard Gateway will provide a key entry point to the river and the San Gabriel River Bike Trail from the City of Downey and the City of Norwalk.

3.6.6 Reach 6: Lower Coastal Plain

Location

This ten-mile reach begins at Firestone Boulevard in Downey and extends to the confluence of the San Gabriel River with Coyote Creek, near the Los Angeles County and Orange County border at Rossmoor, just above the San Diego/San Gabriel Freeway intersection. It is the longest urban reach.

Character

The river bottom in this heavily urbanized reach is concrete, the only stretch of the river where that is the case. An impermeable clay lens or aquaclude lies below the surface and prevents groundwater recharge from taking place here.



Figure 3-34. The river flows in a concrete channel for 10 miles in Reach 6.

Key Issues

While this heavily urbanized area has many parks, they are not sufficient to serve the large population. With the exception of the former NASA site in Downey, most available parks and open space land is along the river, making the river a critical recreational resource for these communities. Many of the large parks in the vicinity of the river, such as El Dorado Regional Park, were not originally oriented toward the river.

Projects Overview

Almost all 23 projects in this reach are focused on expanding recreational opportunities by providing new parks, enhancing or expanding existing ones, and by developing new bike trails or other connections to the river. Many of the proposed bike trails and gateways are designed to facilitate east-west connections across the north-south route of the river. (See Map 3-7 for locations of Reach 6 projects.)

R6.01 Downey Landing

The City of Downey plans to develop a new, combination low-impact/high impact recreation area with ballfields and a walking trail at what was once a parking lot for the former NASA site (home to the Apollo and Space Shuttle Orbiter programs). An interpretive trail along the perimeter of the 11.5-acre park will include natural vegetation and a biofiltration swale system to capture and clean 130 acres of urban stormwater runoff and

provide flood protection. The project includes trailhead and trailside facilities, restrooms, a shade structure for educational purposes, benches, trashcans, drinking fountains and bike racks. The trail will be enhanced with trees providing a canopy of shade, the creek-like swale system and natural vegetation. Interpretive signage will provide information on the process being used to clean the stormwater. Adjacent to the park site will

the 20,000 square foot Columbia Memorial Space Learning Center.

R6.02 Foster Road Gateway

The Foster Road Gateway will serve as a key entry point and pedestrian bridge to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail for the Cities of Downey, Bellflower and Norwalk.

R6.03 H. Byrun Zinn Park Improvements

The City of Bellflower plans open space enhancements including a pedestrian path, trees and benches to an existing four-acre park where Foster Road come to a dead end at the river. Landscape improvements will maintain the current passive, low-impact recreational use. The project will be integrated with the Foster Road Gateway. It is located in the Southern California Edison right-of-way.

R6.04 Rosecrans Avenue Gateway

This project will provide a key entry point to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail for the Cities of Bellflower and Norwalk.

R6.05 Excelsior Drive Gateway Park

Excelsior Drive Gateway Park will serve as a potential entry point from Norwalk to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail.

R6.06 Bellflower High Bike Trail Connection

This bike trail connection from Bellflower High School east to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail at the MTA right-of-way will improve local community access to the river trail.

R6.07 Riverview Park

Riverview Park will be a new 15-acre recreation area fronting the river. The project will provide a natural, riverfront environment serving the residents of Bellflower and many other communities up and down the river. Proposed improvements include a paved bikeway, landscaping, park benches and informational signage. A direct linkage to the San Gabriel

River Bike Trail will be created, as well as linkage to the City of Bellflower West Branch Greenway. There will be an information kiosk for both the River Trail and the West Branch Bikeway (see R6.11). The State of California Resources Agency awarded the City of Bellflower a grant of \$2.97 million for Riverview Park, which will be funded by Proposition 12 park bond funds. The funds will be used for land acquisition, trails, botanical gardens with native plants and passive recreation. In addition, the RMC recently awarded the City of Bellflower \$100,000 in Proposition 40 planning grants to fund planning activities for the property.

R6.8 Alondra Boulevard Gateway

The Alondra Boulevard Gateway will provide a key entry point to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail for the Cities of Bellflower and Norwalk.

R6.9 Cerritos College Bike Link

A bike trail connection from Cerritos College along Alondra Boulevard west to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail will greatly improve local community

R6.10 North Caruther's Channel Improvements

Improvements are needed to address the algae and mosquito problem caused by slow moving water at this tributary to the San Gabriel River. Solutions include creating a soft-bottom and naturalistic channel design to facilitate water flow.



Figure 3-35. Slow moving water in Caruthers Channel encourages algae growth.

R6.11 West Branch Greenway Rails-to-Trails Project

This new 2.5 mile rails-to-trails project on an abandoned Pacific Electric right-of-way will provide an west-east connection from Lakewood Boulevard to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail. The project will result in a Class I bikeway and pedestrian trail.



Figure 3-36. A well-designed skate-park is enjoyed by neighborhood youth.

R6.12 West Branch Greenway Bike Connection Area

This site is proposed for a BMX park. Acquisition of an open space area between the abandoned Pacific Electric railway and the river will be needed to create a full connection between the West Branch Greenway and the river.

R6.13 Artesia Boulevard Gateway

The Artesia Boulevard Gateway will provide a key entry point to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail for the Cities of Bellflower and Cerritos.

R6.14 South Street Gateway

This gateway will improve access to the San Gabriel River west side maintenance road and a future trail to West Gate Park.

R6.15 Liberty Park Improvement Project

Improvements will be made to this existing park to provide accessibility for park users with disabilities and passive natural areas with sensory

amenities. The project will upgrade an existing playground to universal access standards and provide additional playground space. Additional accessible parking will be provided along with an artificial surface track and walking trail. Amenities will also be provided for bikers and joggers on the San Gabriel River Bike Trail.

R6.16 Del Amo Boulevard Gateway

The Del Amo Boulevard Gateway will provide a key entry point to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail for the Cities of Lakewood and Cerritos.

R6.17 Mae Boyer Park Renovation

The project includes potential river parkway enhancements and trail access to an existing 6.8-acre park adjacent to the river. Renovations include picnic shelter replacement and amenity upgrades, parking lots, restrooms and landscaping.

R6.18 West San Gabriel River Open Space Area

This recently completed City of Lakewood project extends open space adjacent to the west side of the river from Monte Verde Park south to Carson Boulevard. This project provides improved bike path linkage on the west side of the river and the San Gabriel River Bike Trail on the east side, an automatic irrigation system, several species of California indigenous trees, meadow grasses and shrubs. Low growing plants are being used under the utility easements. This new park faces Rynerson Park on the east side of the river, creating landscaped parks on both sides of the river. In subsequent phases, the open space extension will continue north, first to Del Amo Boulevard and later to Candlewood Street.

R6.19 Carson Avenue Gateway

The Carson Avenue Gateway will provide a key entry point to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail for the Cities of Lakewood and Long Beach. Better signage is needed for the Lakewood Equestrian Center at Rynerson Park. The intersection may require a traffic signal or an undercrossing of the service road to provide a connection from the West San Gabriel River Open Space Area to the Heartwell Golf Course and Park, which lies farther west along Carson Street.

R6.20 East-West Pedestrian Bridge Enhancement

Enhancements to an existing bridge will provide a connection between the San Gabriel River Bike Trail on the east side of the river and the maintenance road used by bicyclists on the west side.



Figure 3-37. School children enjoy the bridge crossing at the El Dorado Nature Center.

R6.21 El Dorado Regional Park Wetlands (Concept Design Study, See Section 3.8.5)

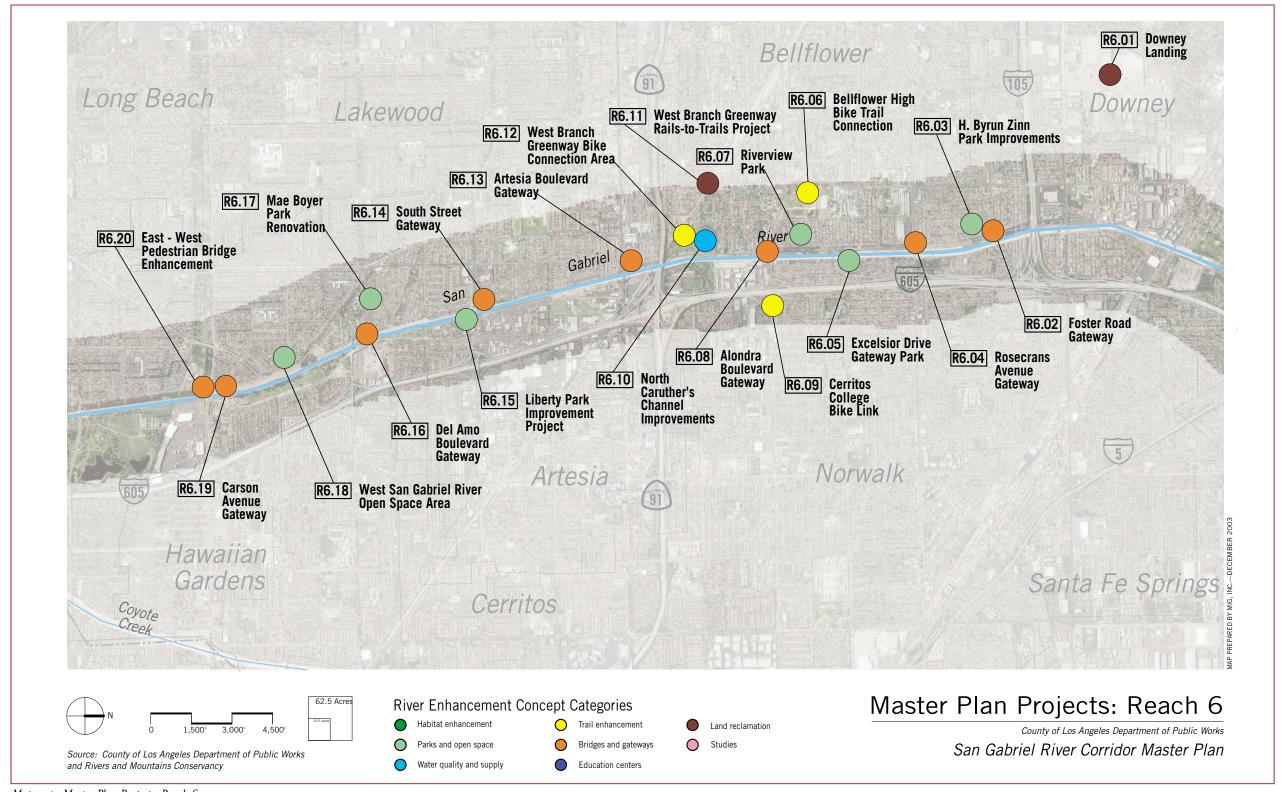
This park borders the river for about two miles, but flood control levees (berms) along the river sever the connection between activities in the park and the river. The City of Long Beach proposed this project to reconnect El Dorado Park with the river. It will create treatment wetlands in the northern section of El Dorado Park and treat San Gabriel River water, stormwater runoff, and/or reclaimed water to replace the potable water supply to the lakes and streams within the regional park.

R6.22 El Dorado Nature Center Master Plan

A recent Master Plan updates the existing Nature Center and surrounding landscape. Improvements will transition the landscape to more low-water and native plants. The ponds and aeration will be improved and the area south of Willow Street will be developed to expand park and open space. That area may also include treatment wetlands.

R6.23 San Gabriel River Walk Phase 1 and 2

The City of Long Beach proposed developing a 1.5-mile pedestrian and bicycle trail through a restored native landscape along the western bank of the river in the City of Los Angeles Department of Water & Power right-of-way. Phase 1 can be built now. The project will begin at Spring Street to the north at the El Dorado Park Golf Course, and run south to Atherton Drive just above the San Diego Freeway. Atherton Drive will provide



Мар 3-7. Master Plan Projects: Reach 6.

regional access to California State University Long Beach and El Dorado Regional Park. A bridge will connect the regional trails on the east bank of the river and along Coyote Creek with the Long Beach trail system. Phase 2, another 1.5-mile stretch of new trail and open space, will begin at Spring Street and travel north along the right of way to Carson. This will connect the West San Gabriel River Open Space Area (see R6.18) in Lakewood above Carson.

3.6.7 Reach 7: Zone of Tidal Influence

Location

The final 3.5 miles of the river flows from Coyote Creek to the Pacific Ocean, flowing between Long Beach in Los Angeles County and Seal Beach in Orange County.

Character

In this last section of the river before it enters the Pacific Ocean, the channel again has a soft bottom. In this reach, salt water from ocean tides mixes with river water in a natural estuary. The Coyote Creek portion is channelized here. Historically, the area near the mouth of the river was dominated by wetlands. Today, large industrial and utility uses in the northern half of the reach gradually give way to plant nurseries, homes and marinas at the southern end of the reach.



Figure 3-38. Tidal action fills the river with salt water as it nears the Pacific Ocean.

Key Issues

Large oilfields and other industrial fields present future land reclamation opportunities, especially possible wetlands restoration. Debris in the river at this point can be a significant problem, especially following storms that bring trash and other pollutants down from upstream areas.

Projects Overview

Many of the 17 projects along this reach are designed to reconnect people to the river and to the wetlands that previously characterized the area. Wetlands restoration projects will also offer habitat for birds and other native species. Other projects provide enhancements to the regional bike trail along the river or connections to it. A number of key projects will address water quality concerns. (See Map 3-8 for locations of Reach 7 projects.)

R7.01 Coyote and Carbon Creeks Watershed Management Plan

This comprehensive watershed plan by the County of Orange is funded by the Regional Board, Proposition 13. This multiple-objective plan addresses erosion, water quality, recreation, habitat and other issues. ACE is conducting a watershed feasibility study in partnership with Orange County.

R7.02 Coyote Creek Bike Trail Enhancements

Proposed enhancements to this bike and pedestrian trail will greatly enhance connectivity to the San Gabriel River Bike Trail. Improvements include native landscaping, decorative gates, water fountains and benches.

R7.03 Coyote Creek Debris Boom

The City of Seal Beach received a grant from the Coastal Conservancy to design a river debris collection system. The project will remove debris and decrease the overall amount of debris in the river. DPW and Orange County Public Facilities and Resources Department are owners of the property. The project is in the design stage.

R7.04 Los Alamitos Channel Treatment Wetland

Orange County proposes urban stormwater treatment wetlands to treat Coyote Creek flows, as part of the ACE Coyote Creek Watershed Plan study.

R7.05 Proposed Confluence Bridge

A proposed bike and pedestrian bridge at the Coyote Creek Confluence will connect the San Gabriel River Bike Trail to the Coyote Creek Bike Trail.

R7.06 San Gabriel River Walk Phase 3

This project is a continuation of the San Gabriel River Walk (see R6.23). This stretch of trail will extend from Atherton, along the west side of the river, potentially all the way down to the Long Beach Marina. It will involve Seal Beach for a small segment where College Estates Park exists, just above the 22 Freeway.

R7.07 Los Cerritos Wetland Restoration (Bryant and Bixby)

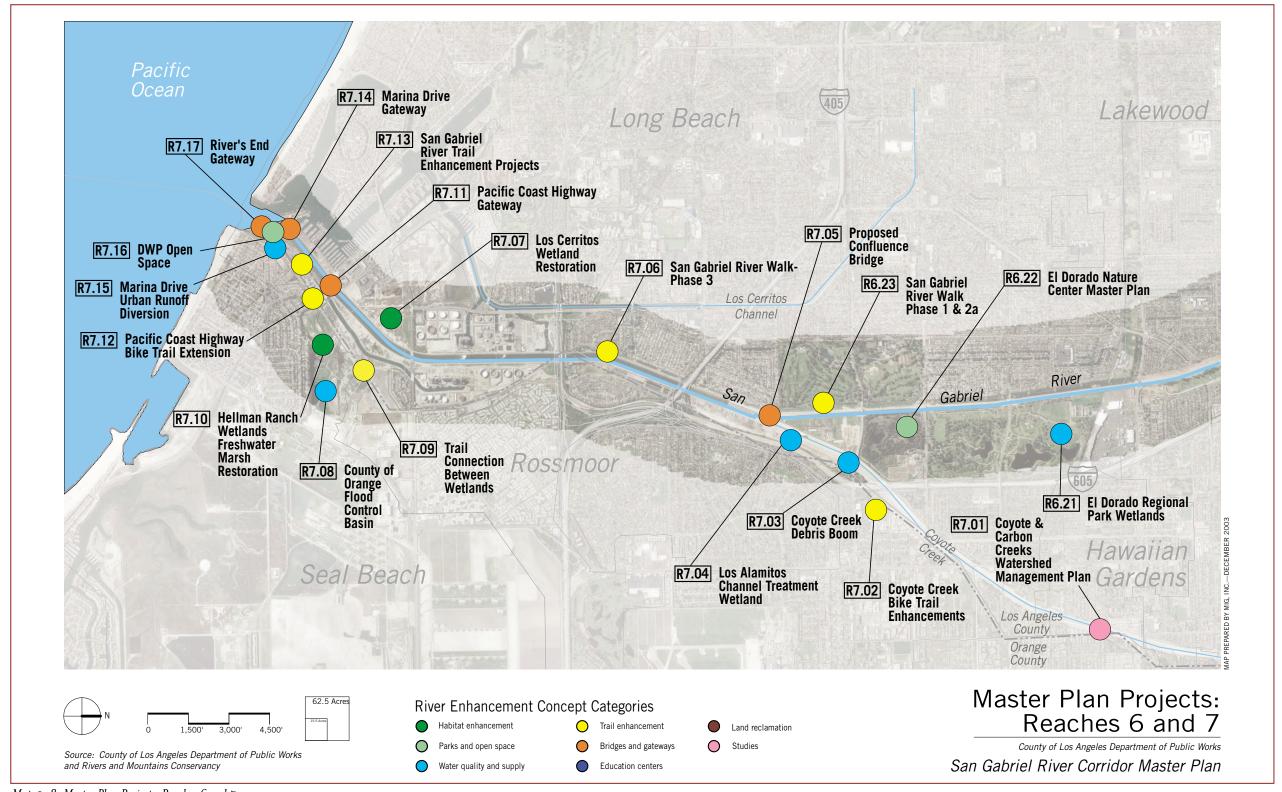
This project proposes acquiring about 266 acres of land currently used for oil operations. The Bixby property is 181 acres and the Bryant property approximately 85 acres. The sites, located near the end of the river just north of Alamitos Bay, are surrounded by urban development but still provide valuable habitat for birds and a salt marsh field.

R7.08 County of Orange Flood Control Basin

This project proposes constructing wetlands or other retention basins near the Los Alamitos Channel to expand the flood capacity for runoff flowing from southwest Orange County. Flooding problems will be alleviated in the community of Rossmoor.



Figure 3–39. Coyote Creek merges with the San Gabriel River just below El Dorado Regional Park.



Map 3-8. Master Plan Projects: Reaches 6 and 7.