

Los Angeles River Revitalization

Presentation to the California Recreational Trails Committee

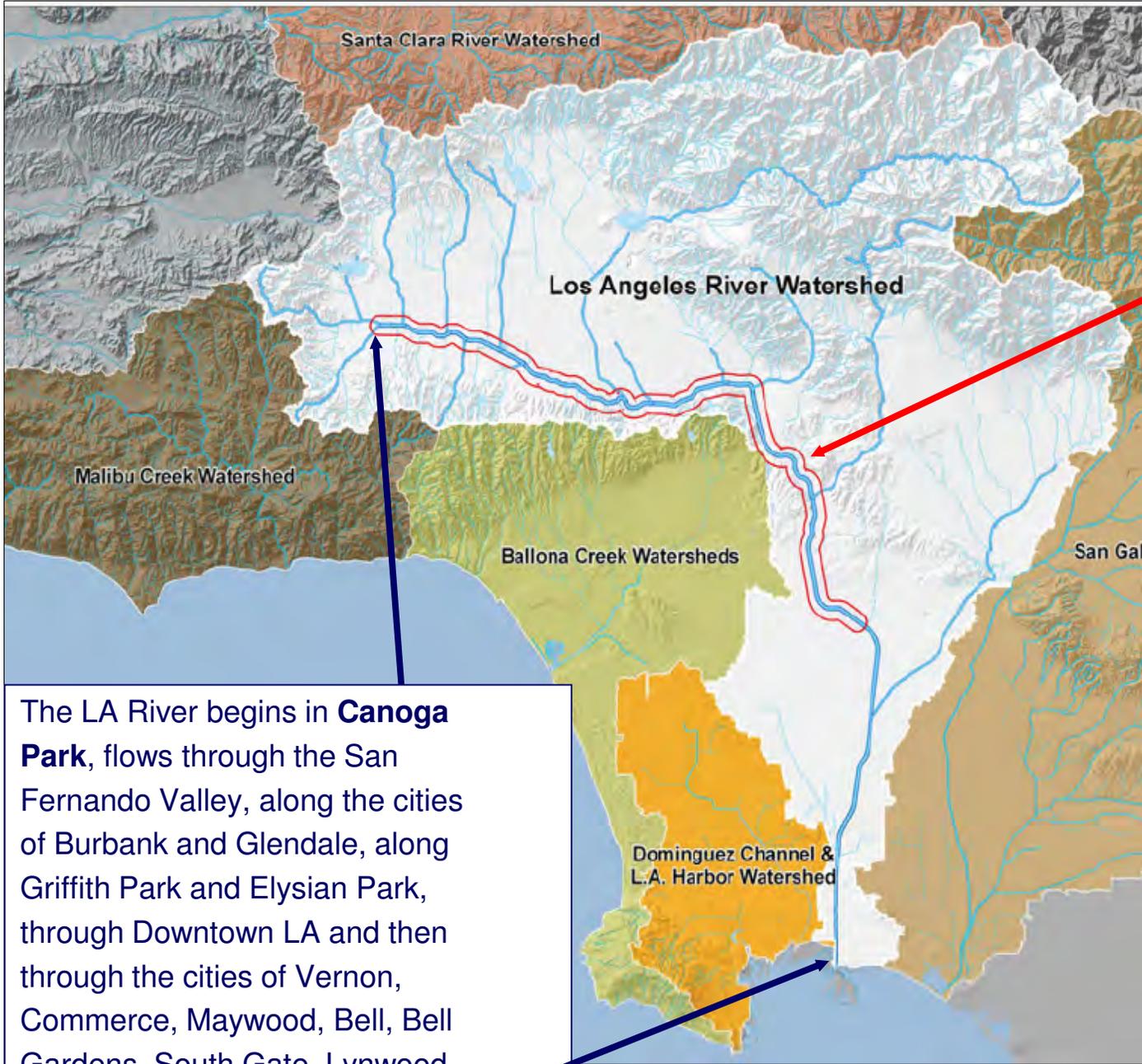
April 18, 2012







1948: Modeling Flood Control



LA River Watershed:
870 square miles

LA River:
51 miles

1st 32 miles in City of LA

Elevation at Origin
(Canoga Park):
772 feet

Elevation at Outlet
(Pacific Ocean):
0 feet

Avg. Slope:
0.29%

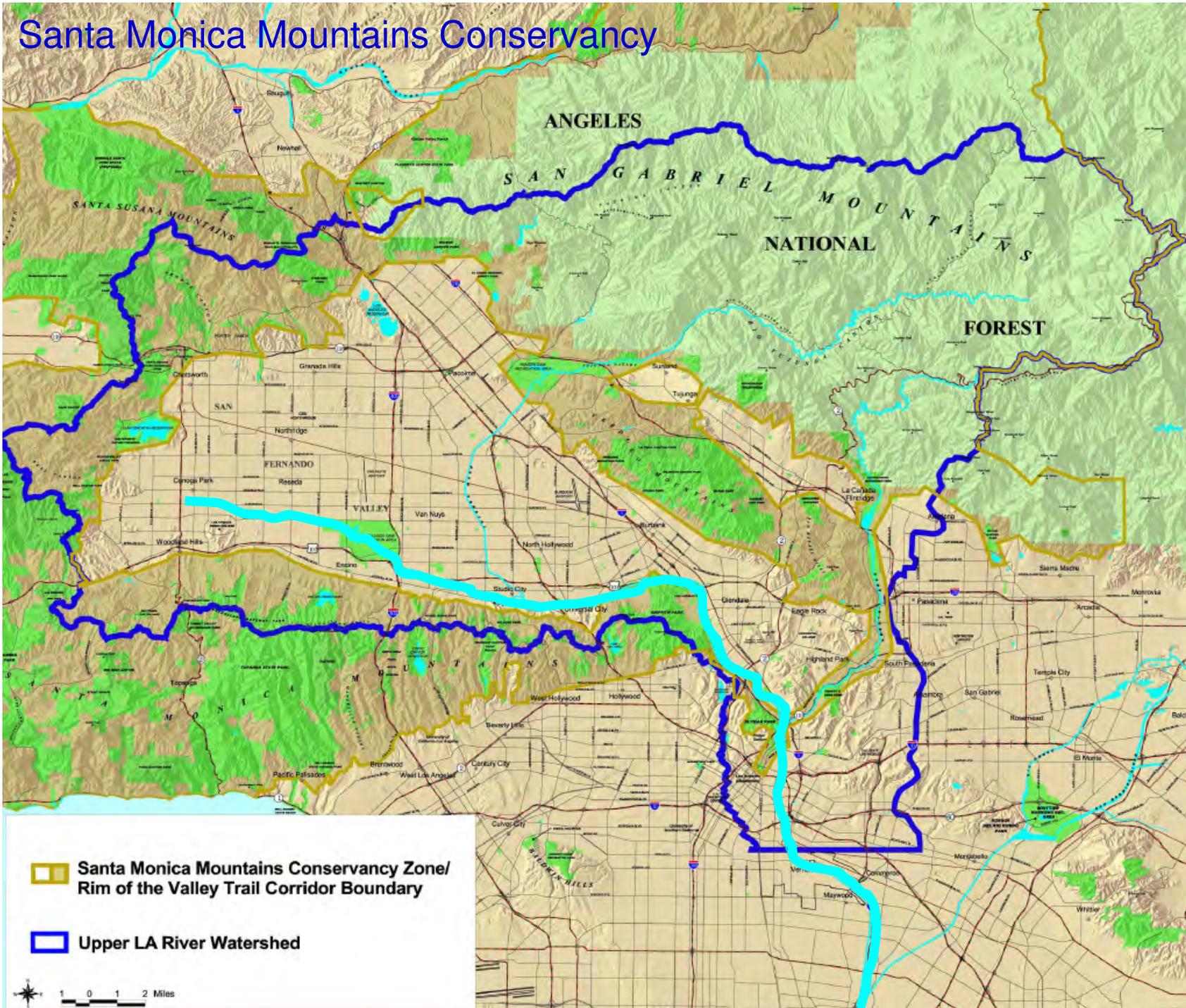
Avg. Annual
Precipitation:
15 inches

Avg. Daily Discharge:
320 cfs or 207 mgd

The LA River begins in **Canoga Park**, flows through the San Fernando Valley, along the cities of Burbank and Glendale, along Griffith Park and Elysian Park, through Downtown LA and then through the cities of Vernon, Commerce, Maywood, Bell, Bell Gardens, South Gate, Lynwood, Compton, Paramount, Carson, and **Long Beach**

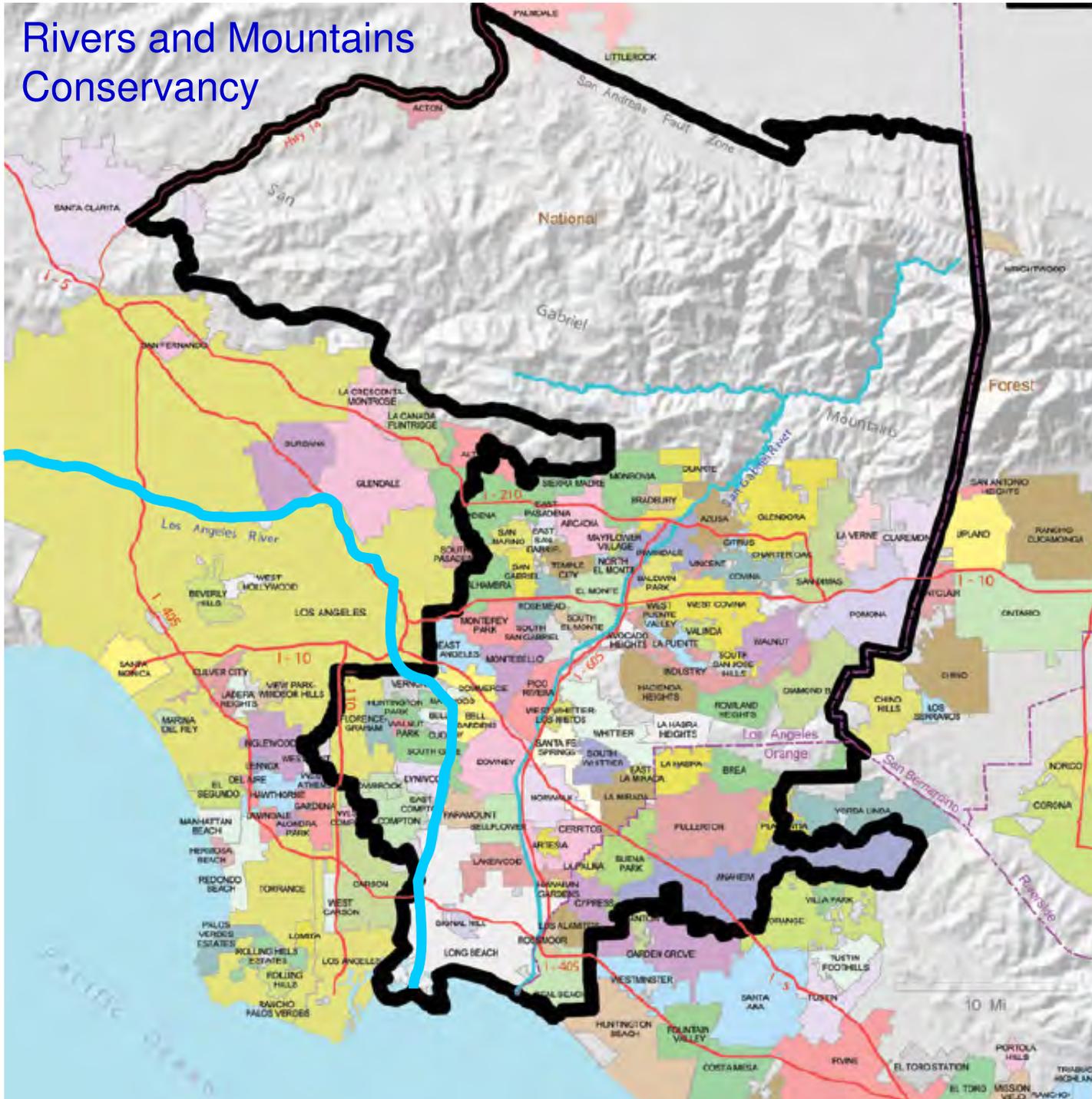
The LA River flows through the nation's 2nd largest urban region, into 2 of the world's busiest port regions, and into the world's largest water body.

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy



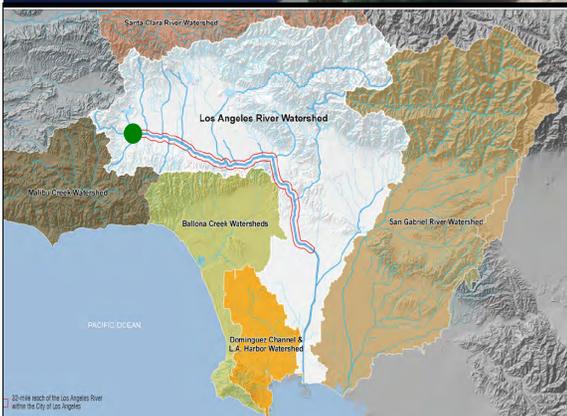
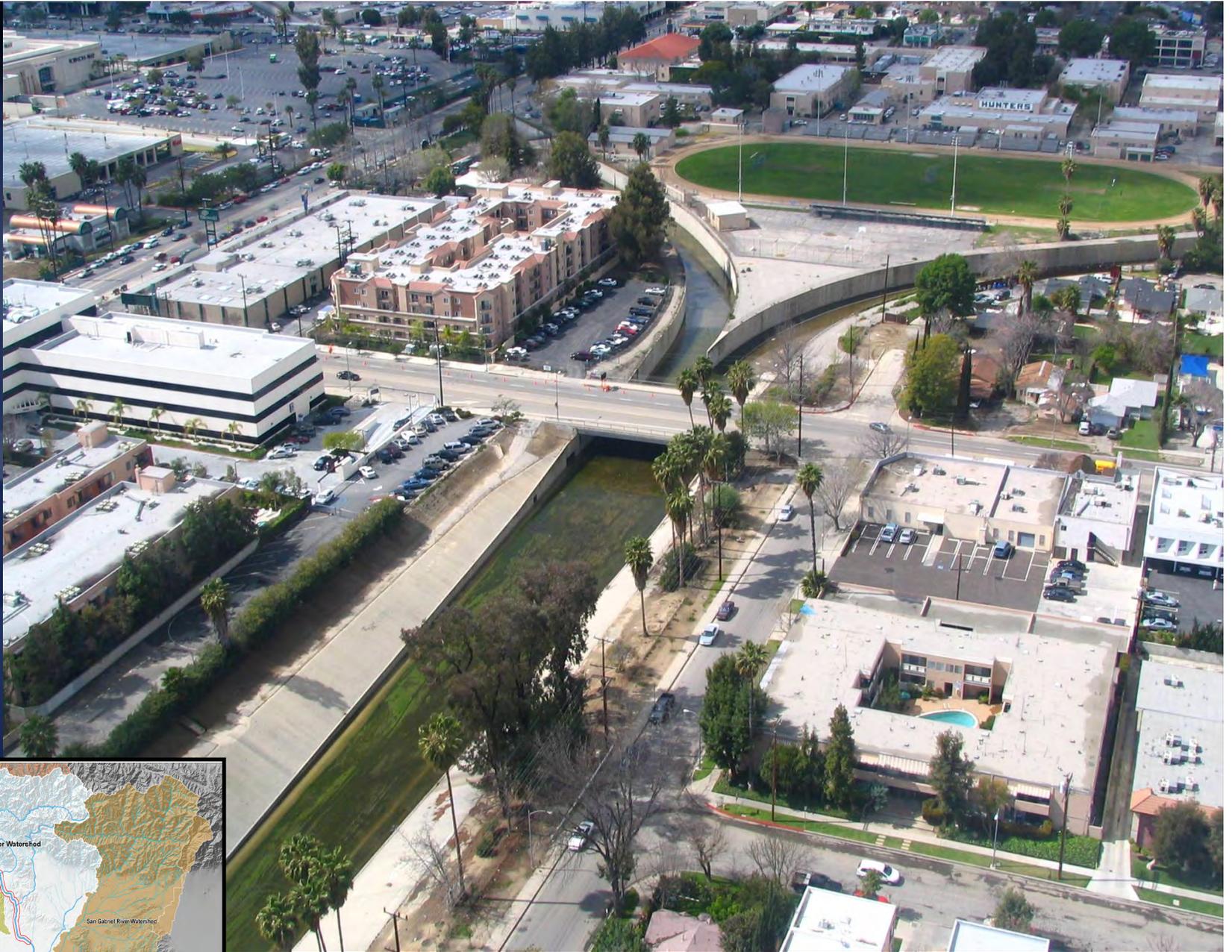
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Rivers and Mountains Conservancy

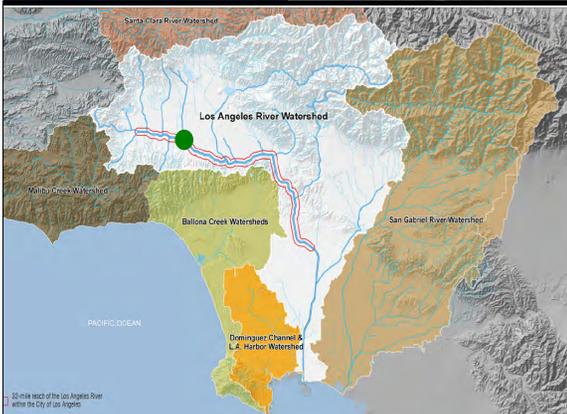


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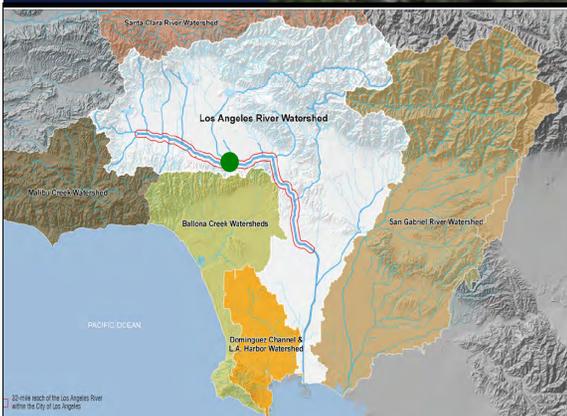


**Beginning of the LA River in the San Fernando Valley—
Community of Canoga Park**



The Sepulveda Basin

Universal City

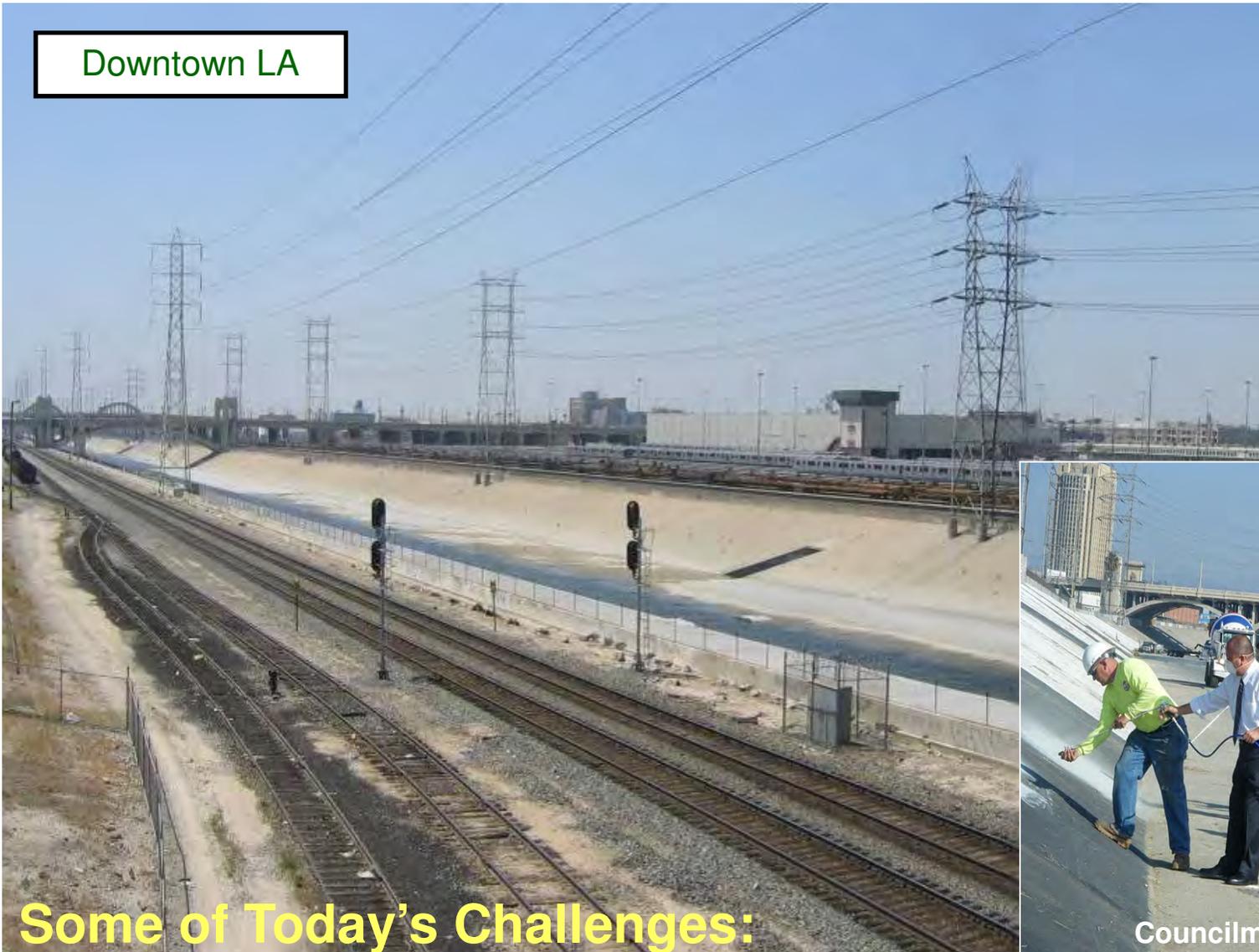


Contemporary Landscape



Facing Westward
(toward Griffith Park)
at the Verdugo Wash Confluence

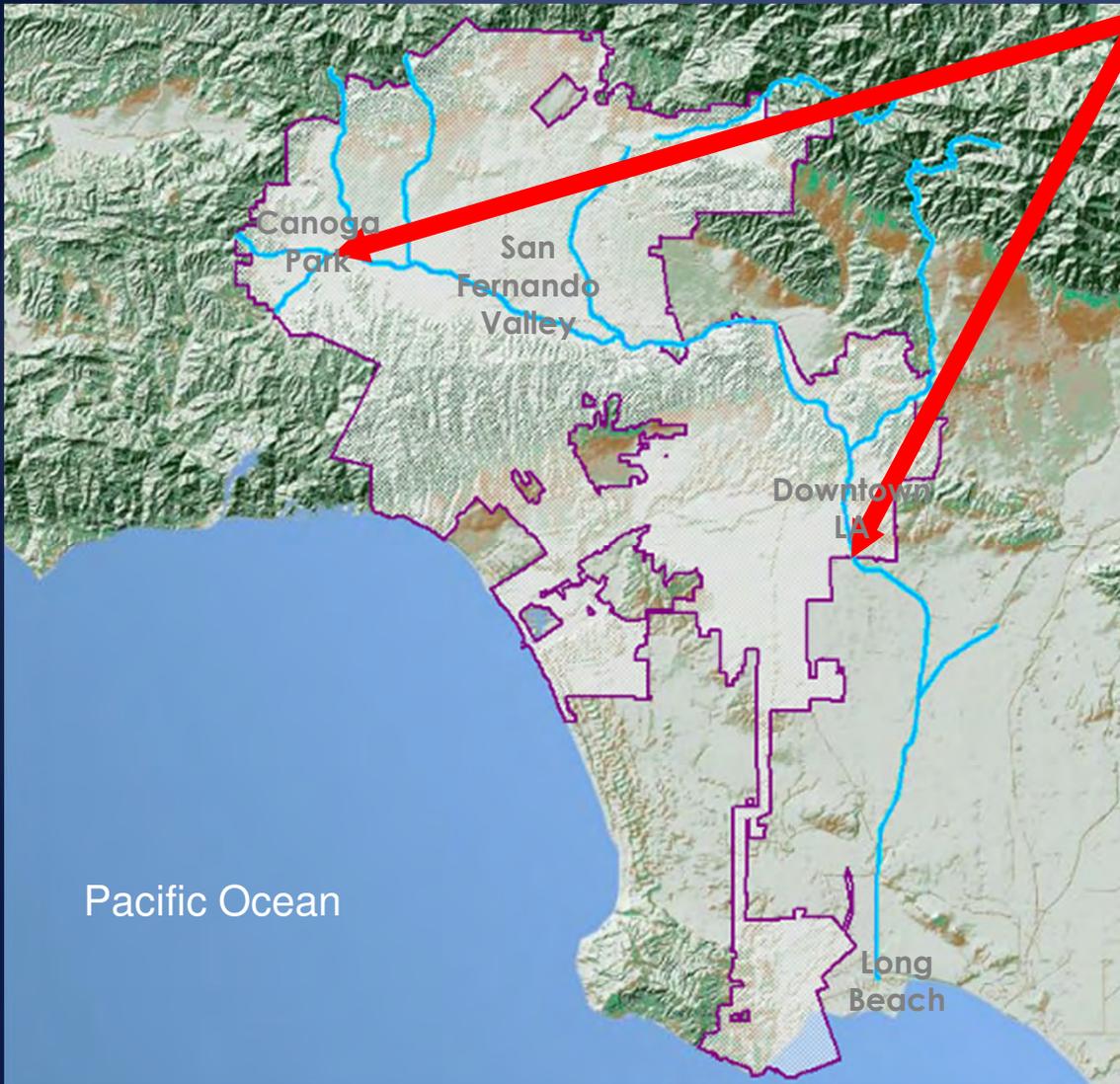
Downtown LA



Councilmembers remove graffiti.

Some of Today's Challenges:

- Every time it rains, the fresh rainwater collects contaminants from the many paved surfaces upstream of the River, which it then funnels to the Pacific Ocean.
- This process means the region's groundwater aquifers are not being replenished and both near- and distant-coastal environments are harmed.
- The River has divided human communities and wildlife habitats.



Within the City of LA, the LA River Corridor (1/2 mile from each bank) is Home to:

- More than 1 million people (2000)*
- More than 390,000 housing units (2000)
- More than 480,000 workers (2000)
- More than 35,000 businesses (2003)
- More than 80 schools (2004-5)

At the end of 2009 only 4 states had higher unemployment rates than California (12.4%):

- Nationwide: 9.7%
- LA County: 12%
- LA City: 13.2%
- City of Commerce: 21.1%
- Compton: 20.2%
- Bell Gardens: 18.9%
- Lynwood: 18.8%

*Year of data

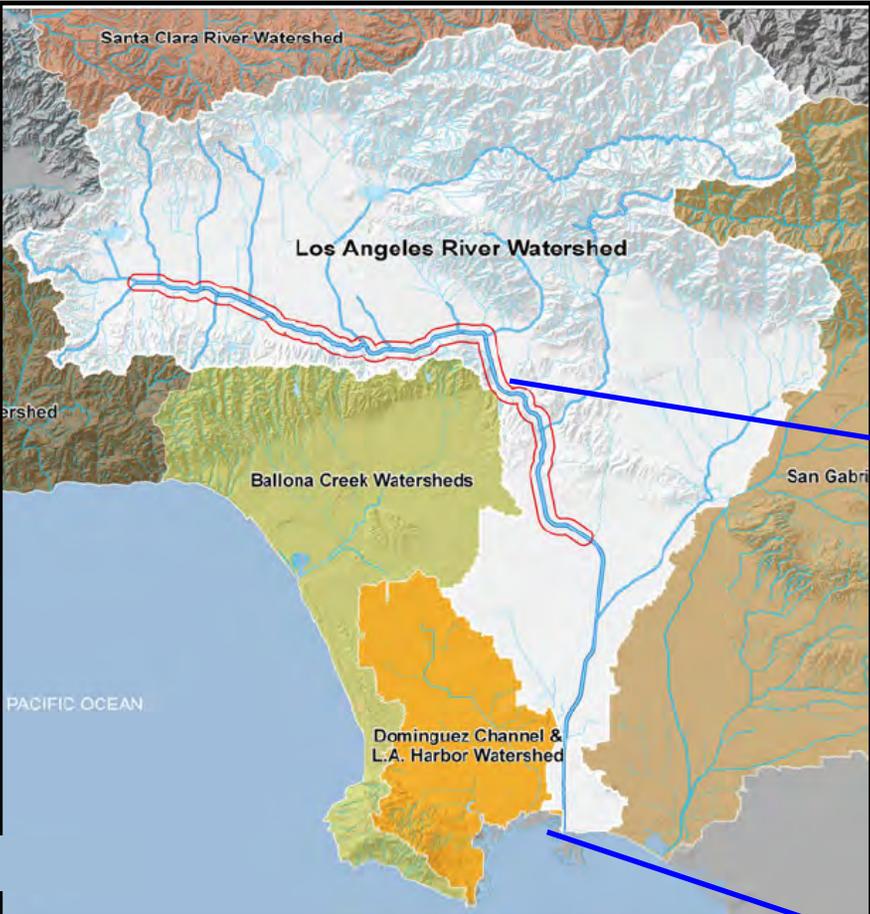
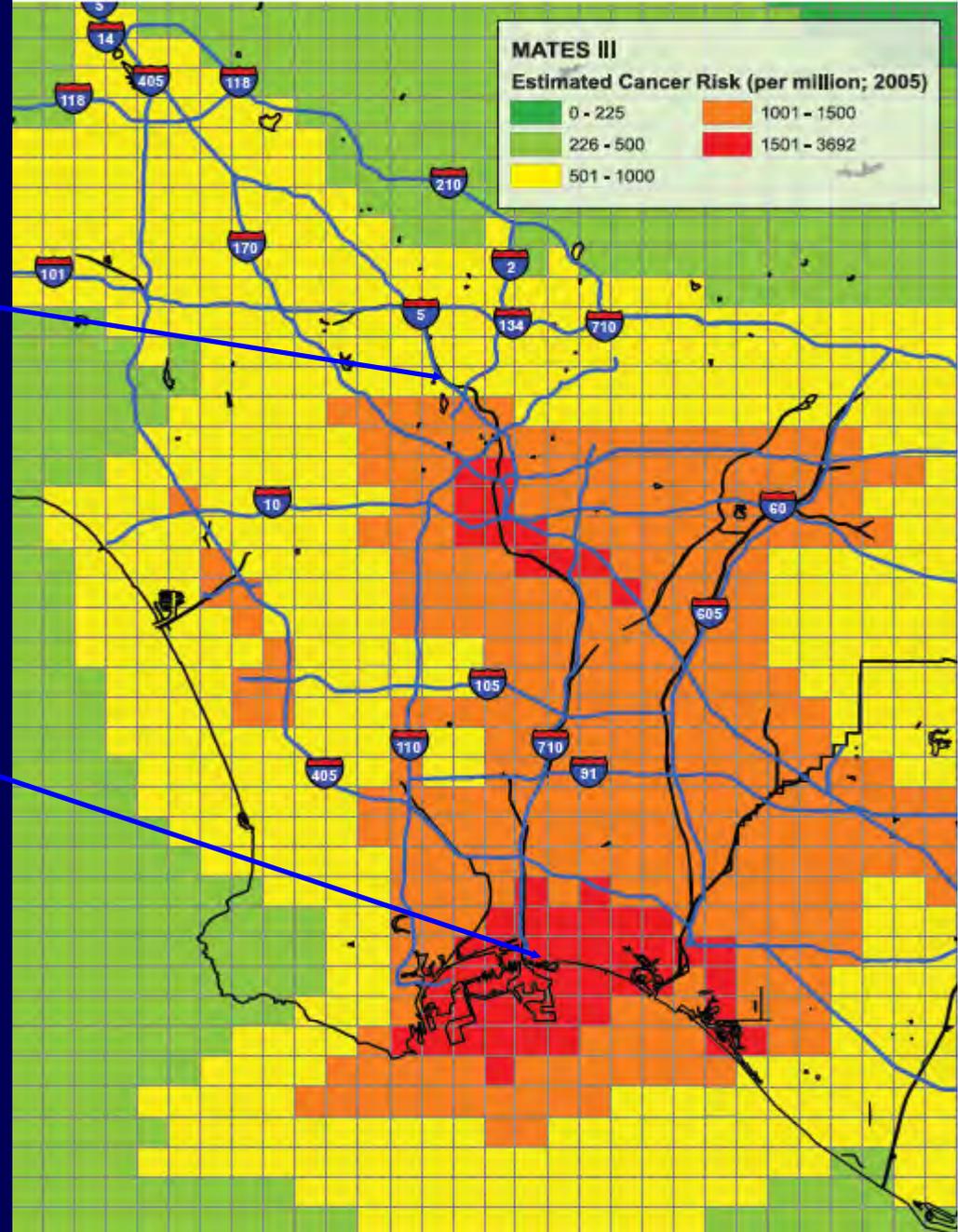
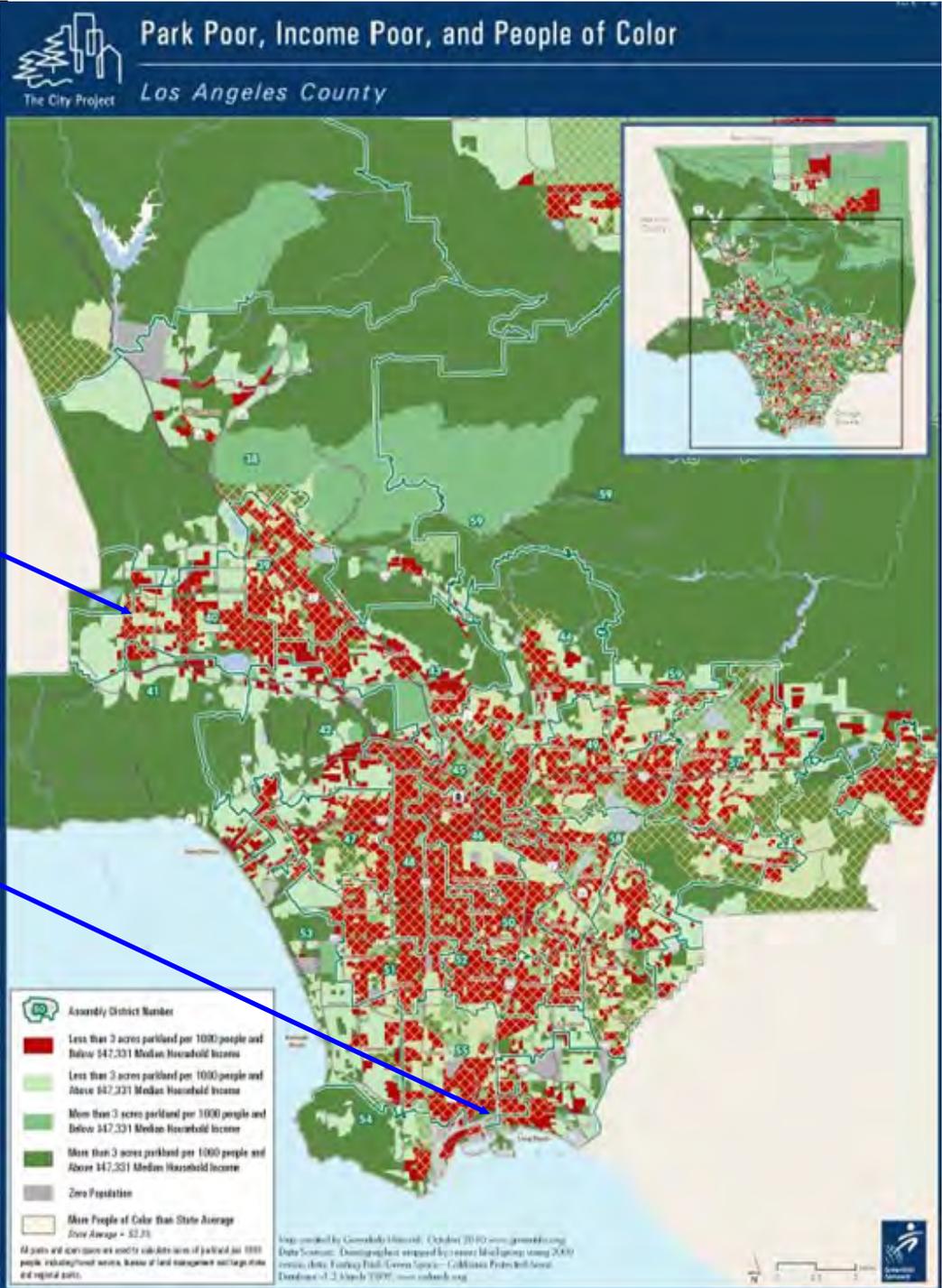


Figure 1. Los Angeles' Epicenter of Cancer Risk



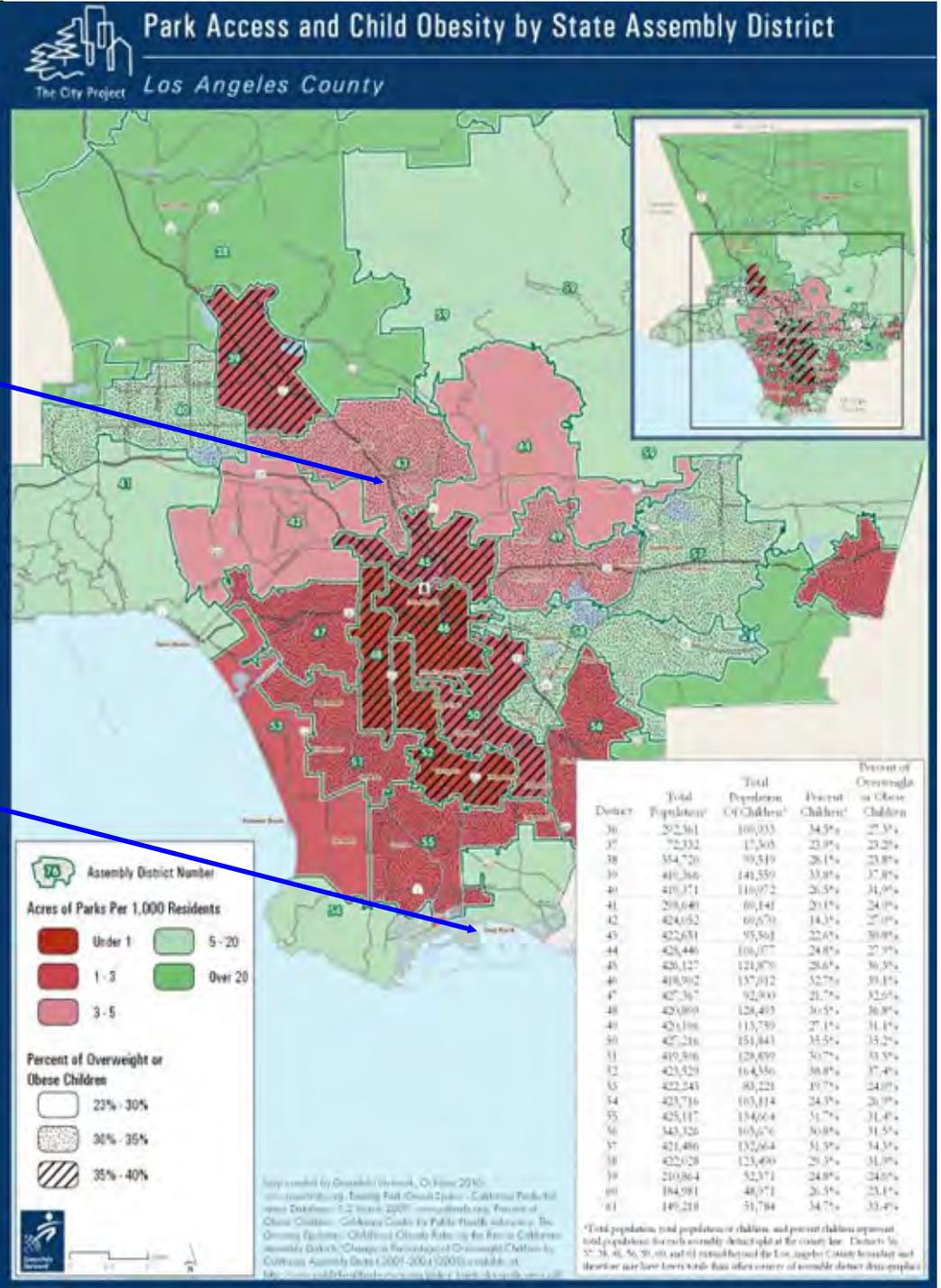
A significant portion of the LA River falls within the “Epicenter of Cancer Risk” in terms of air toxics.

Source: *Hidden Hazards: A Call to Action for Healthy, Livable Communities*, Los Angeles Collaborative for Environmental Health and Justice, Liberty Hill Foundation, 2010



The LA River flows through many low-income communities of color that lack access to parks.

Source: The City Project, www.cityprojectca.org



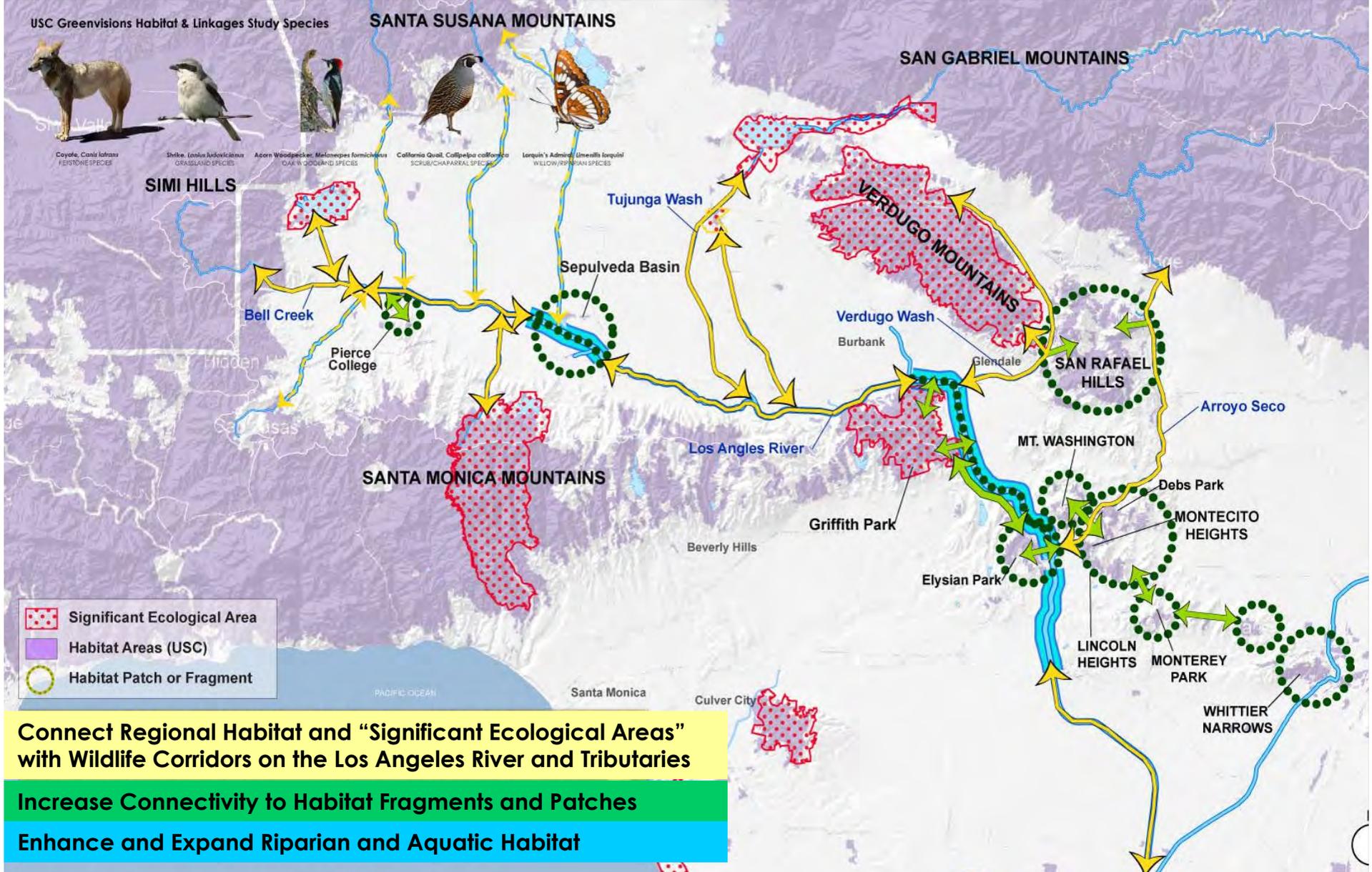
The LA River flows through many communities with high incidences of childhood obesity.

Source: The City Project, www.cityprojectca.org



THE LOS ANGELES RIVER REVITALIZATION MASTER PLAN

OUR RIVER, OUR FUTURE





THE LOS ANGELES RIVER REVITALIZATION MASTER PLAN

OUR RIVER, OUR FUTURE

- **Adopted May 2007**
 - **32 miles**
 - **50 year horizon**
-
- **More than 240 potential projects**
 - **20 areas of targeted focus and 5 detailed opportunity areas**
 - **3 new management entities**
 - **Recommends a 32 mile bikeway/greenway that, when combined with the County's efforts, represents a 51-mile River corridor (102 miles both sides!):**
 - **Reduce the urban heat island effect**
 - **Decrease GHG emissions**
 - **Provide access to open space and recreation for underserved communities**
 - **Serve as a means of non-motorized commuting to jobs across the region**





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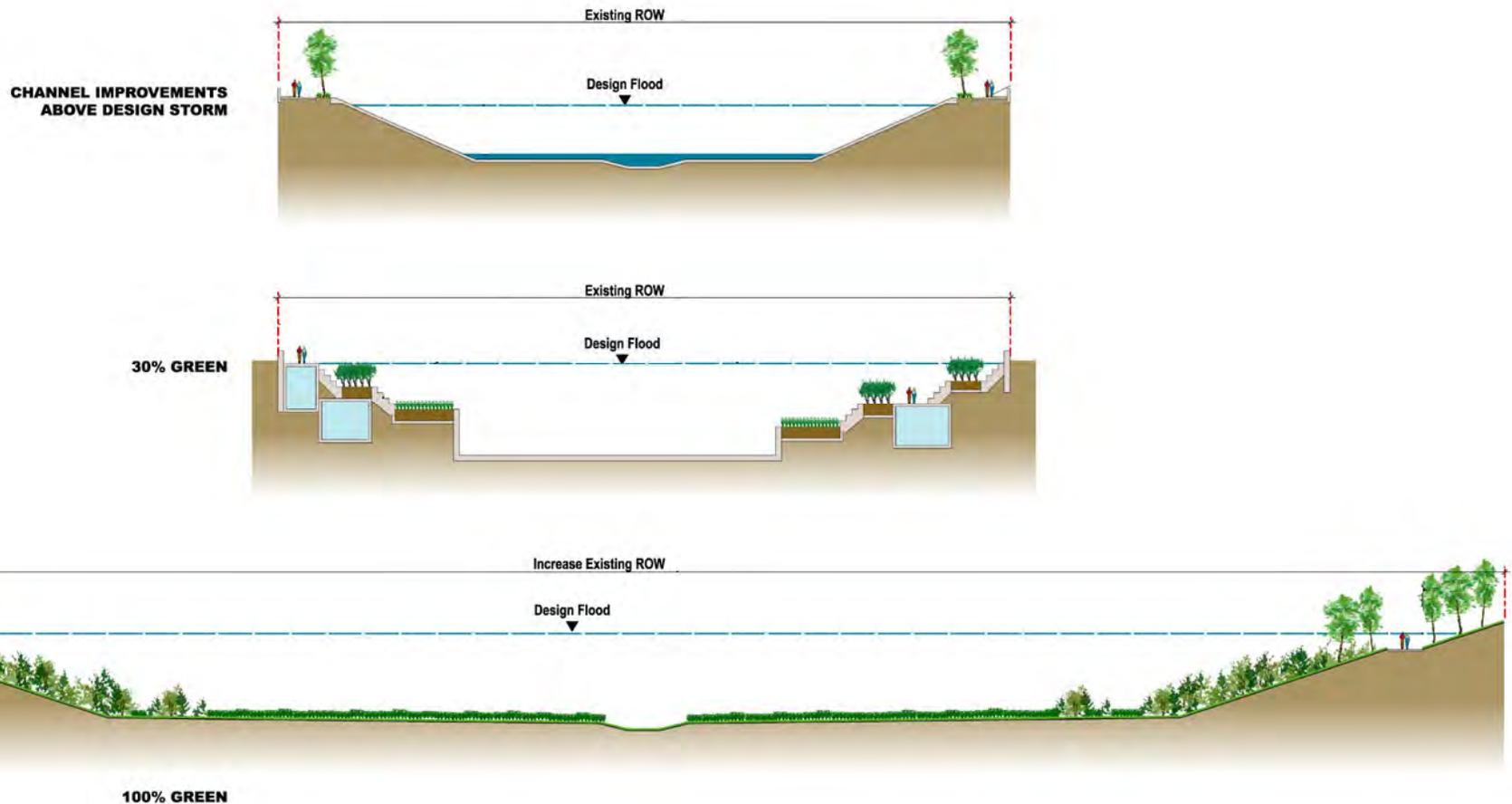
The LA River Team

- **Oversight/Direction:** Mayor and City Council Ad Hoc Committee on the River
- **Lead Agency/Project Manager:** City of LA Bureau of Engineering
- **Funding:** City Department of Water and Power
- **Consultants:** Tetra Tech, Inc. with Civitas, Wenk Associates, Mia Lehrer + Associates, The Robert Group, Adan Ortega, TLUC, Miguel Luna, David Marquez, Urban Partners, Asset Strategies, HNTB
- **Partners:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, State of California, LA County





Where Do We Begin? What Are Our Options?



To accommodate more green space in the River, we must either expand the channel, deepen it, add off-line means of conveyance (a bypass) or implement a combination of these measures.

Future Possibilities Through LA River Revitalization

Channel Energy

- Enhance flood storage, water quality, and public access
- Restore a functional riparian ecosystem and reduce flow velocity







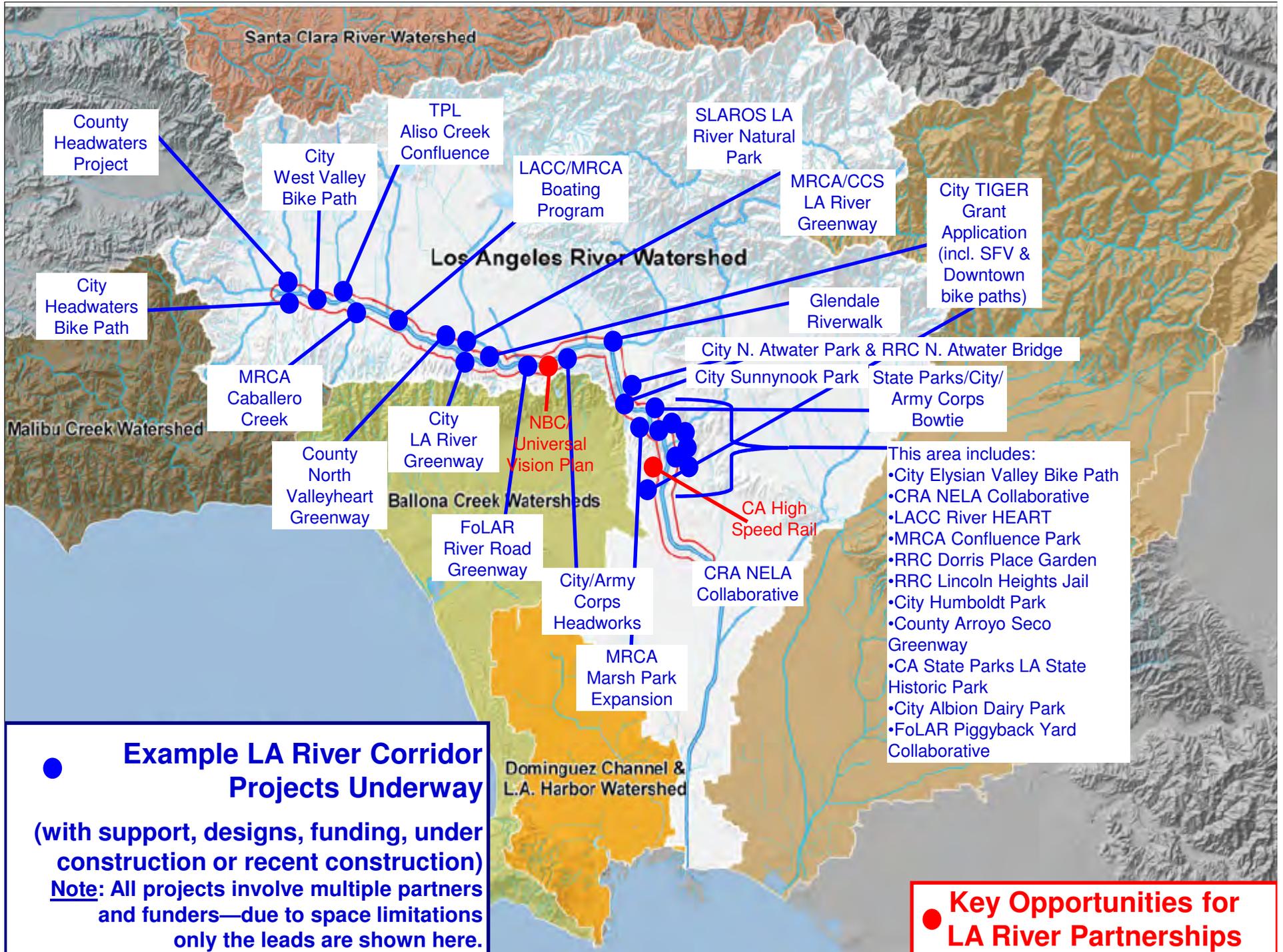
Bringing Nature Back to the Post-Industrial Landscape

- From a near-absence of environmental value...



- to a reenvisioned, rejuvenated natural resource







LARRMP GOAL (p. 4-3; 4-15 to -17)

ENABLE SAFE PUBLIC ACCESS

Example Project: City of LA's N. Atwater Park (Atwater Village, Council District 4)

- Adds 3 acres to a 1.17-acre creek restoration project on land owned by the City
- Along soft-bottomed stretch of River with beautiful views into hills of Griffith Park
- Connects to existing park, ballfields, and equestrian facilities
- Colorado (upstream 0.6 mile), and Los Feliz (downstream 0.7 mile—to bikeway)
- Received \$2 million in California River Parkways Prop. 50 funds
- Grand opening April 12, 2012





LARRMP GOAL (p. 5-3; 5-5 to -10)

CREATE A CONTINUOUS RIVER GREENWAY

Recommendation 5.1

Provide opportunities for continuous and uninterrupted movement along the River.

Recommendation 5.2

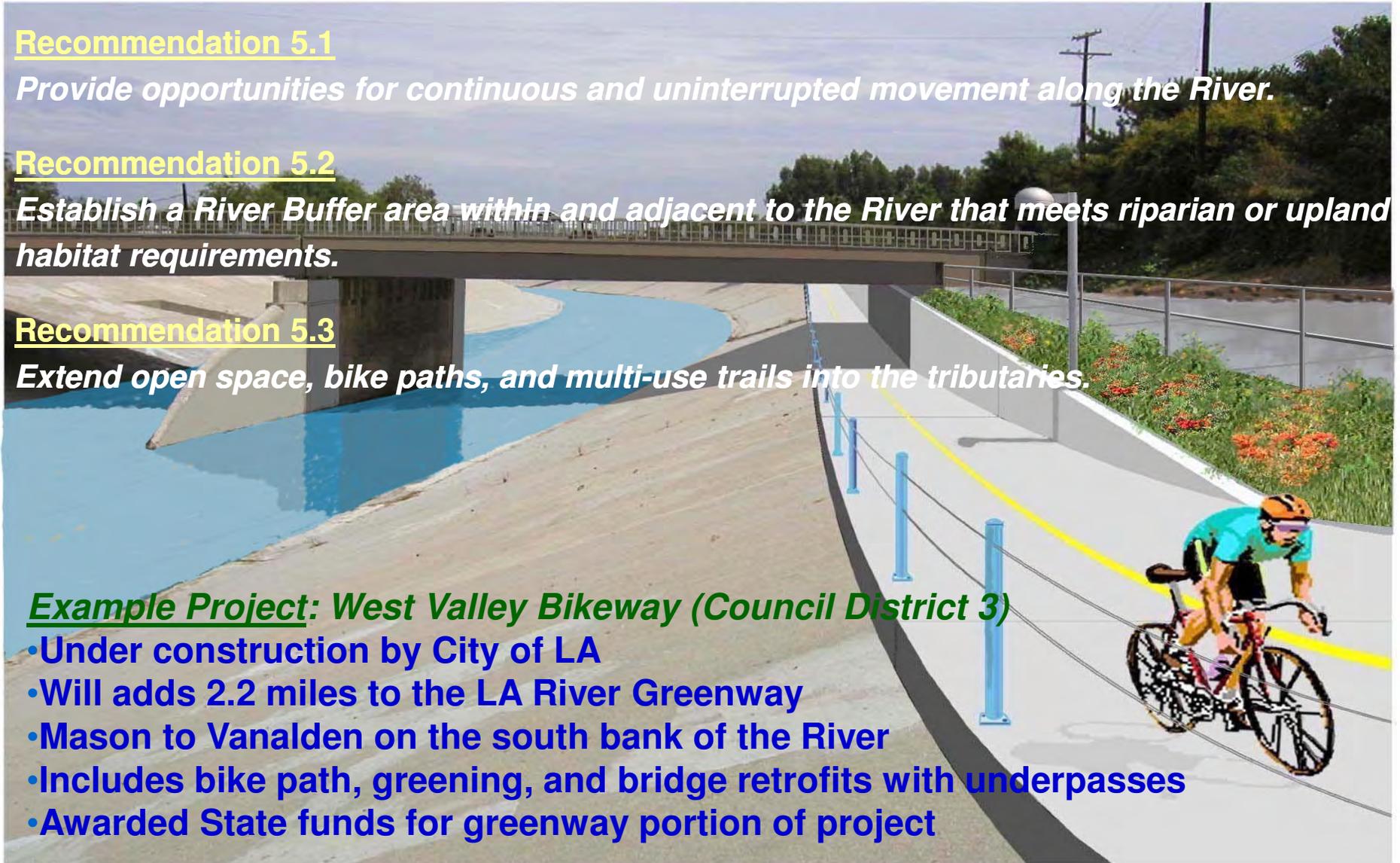
Establish a River Buffer area within and adjacent to the River that meets riparian or upland habitat requirements.

Recommendation 5.3

Extend open space, bike paths, and multi-use trails into the tributaries.

Example Project: West Valley Bikeway (Council District 3)

- Under construction by City of LA
- Will add 2.2 miles to the LA River Greenway
- Mason to Vanalden on the south bank of the River
- Includes bike path, greening, and bridge retrofits with underpasses
- Awarded State funds for greenway portion of project





LARRMP GOAL (p. 5-3; 5-11 to -20)

CONNECT NEIGHBORHOODS TO THE RIVER



Recommendation 5.4

Provide green arterial connections to the River. Where suitable, landscaped areas should be designed to meet upland habitat requirements.

Recommendation 5.5

Create safe, non-motorized routes between the River and cultural institutions, parks, civic institutions, transit-oriented development, schools, transit hubs, and commercial and employment centers within 1 mile of the River.

Recommendation 5.6

Increase direct pedestrian and visual access to the River.



*Above: Existing County and City Trails in Studio City
(south bank from Radford to Whitsett in Council District 2)*

*Right: Elysian Valley Bikeway Grand Opening in December 2010
(Council Districts 4 and 13)*



LARRMP GOAL (p. 5-3; 5-11 to -20)

CONNECT NEIGHBORHOODS TO THE RIVER



Upcoming Trails in Studio City (Council Districts 2 and 5):

County: North bank from Coldwater to Fulton; Community Conservation Solutions: North bank from Coldwater to Whitsett; and (concept shown) City: South bank from Coldwater to Whitsett)

*Upcoming Trail in Canoga Park (Council District 3):
County Headwaters Greenway (from Owensmouth to Mason)*



LARRMP GOAL (p. 5-3; 5-21 to -31)

EXTEND OPEN SPACE & WATER QUALITY FEATURES INTO NEIGHBORHOODS



***Example Project: Marsh Park, Elysian Valley, Council District 13
Project of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and Mountains Recreation
and Conservation Authority***



LARRMP GOAL (p. 5-3; 5-21 to -31)

EXTEND OPEN SPACE & WATER QUALITY FEATURES INTO NEIGHBORHOODS

Example Projects:

Albion Dairy Park (Council District 1)

- City acquired 6-acre parcel with \$17 million in local Prop. O water quality funds
- State grant application submitted by LANI in 2011
- Visit www.albionparkproject.org for more information.



Sunnynook River Park (Council District 4)

- 3.4 acres (owned by Caltrans and LADWP)
- Connects to River bikeway
- Funded by State
- Designed by City
- Construction in 2012



LARRMP GOAL (p. 5-3; 5-31 to -35)

ENHANCE RIVER IDENTITY

Recommendation 5.12

Identify physical opportunities to improve the visibility of the River Corridor.

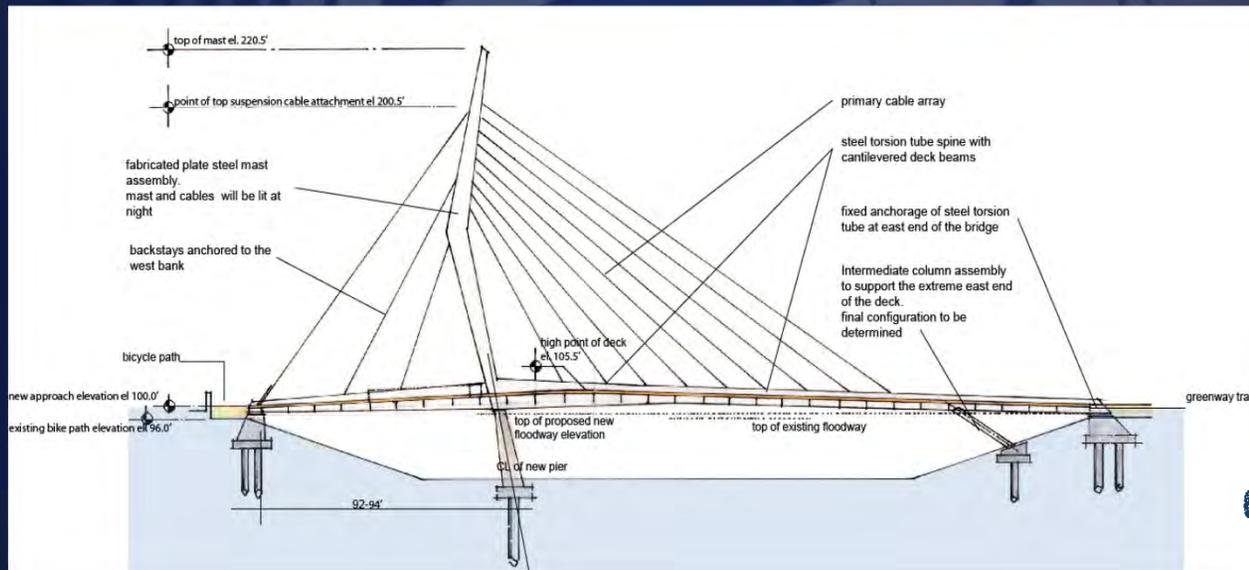
Recommendation 5.13

Identify opportunities to improve public perception of the River Corridor.

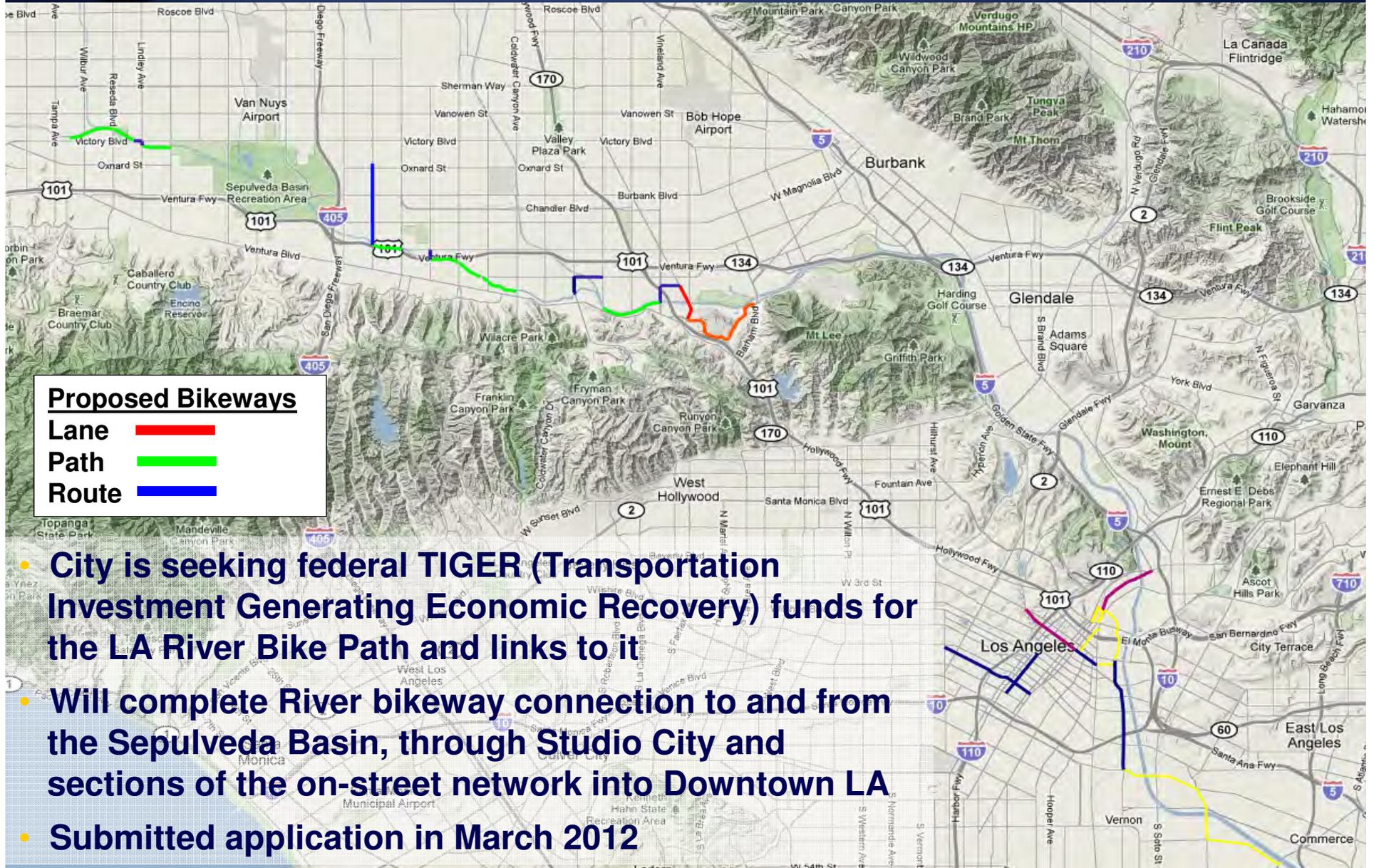
Recommendation 5.14

Encourage local and diverse character within the River Corridor.

Example Project: The LA RRC's Atwater Crossing (CD4)



- The first privately-funded LA River project since the LARRMP's adoption!
- Will connect Atwater Village to Griffith Park: cyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians



Proposed Bikeways

- Lane █
- Path █
- Route █

- **City is seeking federal TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) funds for the LA River Bike Path and links to it**
- **Will complete River bikeway connection to and from the Sepulveda Basin, through Studio City and sections of the on-street network into Downtown LA**
- **Submitted application in March 2012**



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River Planning

DEPT. OF CITY PLANNING

LOS ANGELES RIVER IMPROVEMENT OVERLAY DISTRICT

LA-RIO

- **Guidelines and standards addressing watershed, urban design and mobility alternatives**
- **Approved by City Planning Commission**
- **Full City Council vote expected in 2012**



River as Cherished Place



Photo Source: www.rvca.com/advocates/?p=11568





January 12, 2012



**Federal “America’s Great Outdoors” and “Urban Waters Federal Partnership” Leaders Visit the LA River:
USDOI Secretary Salazar Announces LA River Trail System as National Priority**

(Photo by Tami Heilemann, USDOI; l to r: Ruth Coleman, Director, California State Parks; Col. Michael Wehr, South Pacific Division Commander, US Army Corps of Engineers; Omar Brownson, Executive Director, LA River Revitalization Corporation; The Honorable Tom LaBonge, LA City Councilman, District 4; The Honorable Ken Salazar, Secretary, US Department of the Interior; The Honorable Antonio Villaraigosa, Mayor, City of Los Angeles; The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard, US Representative, California District 34; The Honorable Adam Schiff, US Representative, California District 29; The Honorable Ed Reyes, LA City Councilman, District 1 and Chair, Council Ad Hoc Committee on the LA River)

THANK YOU



THE LOS ANGELES RIVER REVITALIZATION MASTER PLAN

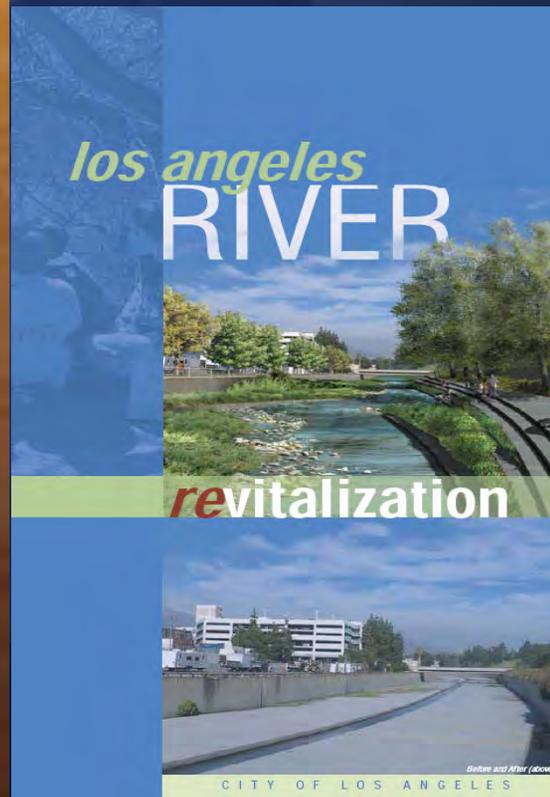
OUR RIVER, OUR FUTURE

The Los Angeles River



THE FUTURE IS NOW

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Be Riveryly!

