

DATE: May 23, 2016

TO: Watershed Conservation Authority Governing Board

FROM: WCA Staff

THROUGH: Mark Stanley, Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Item7: Liaison and Activities Report

Regional Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Planning: The Leadership Committee is in the process of preparing a region-wide application in response to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Program (DACIP). This work will be performed under the supervision of the Executive Officer of the RMC or his designee. A disadvantaged community per the State of California Water Code Section 79505.5 (a) is defined as a community with a median household income that is less than 80 percent of the Statewide annual median household income (80% of the Statewide MHI is currently estimated as \$48,875). The RFP will be submitted to the DWR on behalf of the Leadership Committee in May or June 2016. It is anticipated that the State will then have coordination meetings with the Greater LA Subregion which includes: Greater LA, Ventura County and Upper Santa Clara. The next leadership meeting where the proposal will be discussed is scheduled for May 25, 2016.

The San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers Mountains Conservancy and all members of the Leadership Committee have adopted the Memorandum of Understanding and Operating Guidelines renewing commitment to participate in the policy, evaluation, and selection of projects of regional benefit. The renovated commitment is based on the regional plan update, which among other items includes identification and development of multi-purpose projects that combine habitat restoration and recreational access with water quality and conservation objectives.

San Gabriel River Discovery Center Authority: The SGRDCA Design Team having completed 90% Construction Documents for Stage 1 construction submitted to LA County for plan check approvals. Electrical, Geotechnical and Mechanical County Departments have provided plan check approvals. The Army Corps of Engineers review process is underway. A draft license agreement from County Parks is near the end of the review process and approaching finalization. SGRDCA Board approved of an amendment to the professional services contract with Watershed Conservation Authority for continued support of San Gabriel River Discovery Center activities in January and was accepted by WCA's Board on March 19, 2015 board meeting (Resolution 2015-13). A disbursement request letter has been provide to LA County Sanitation Districts for review and approval to begin the release SEP funding from escrow account for Construction Document Design fees.

San Gabriel Mountains National Monument: In partnership with the Southern Californian Association of Governments, San Gabriel Mountains National Monument and Angeles National Forest held a Monument Transpiration Workshop on April 28th, 2016. Forest supervisor Jeffery Vail provided an overview presentation of the current access opportunities and challenges faced by the U.S. Forest Service, as well as shared image of localized congestion issues within the Monument that occur at peak period of recreational demand, such as summertime holiday weekends. Other key transportation stakeholder also presented their perspectives on the opportunities and challenges related to access and transit to the

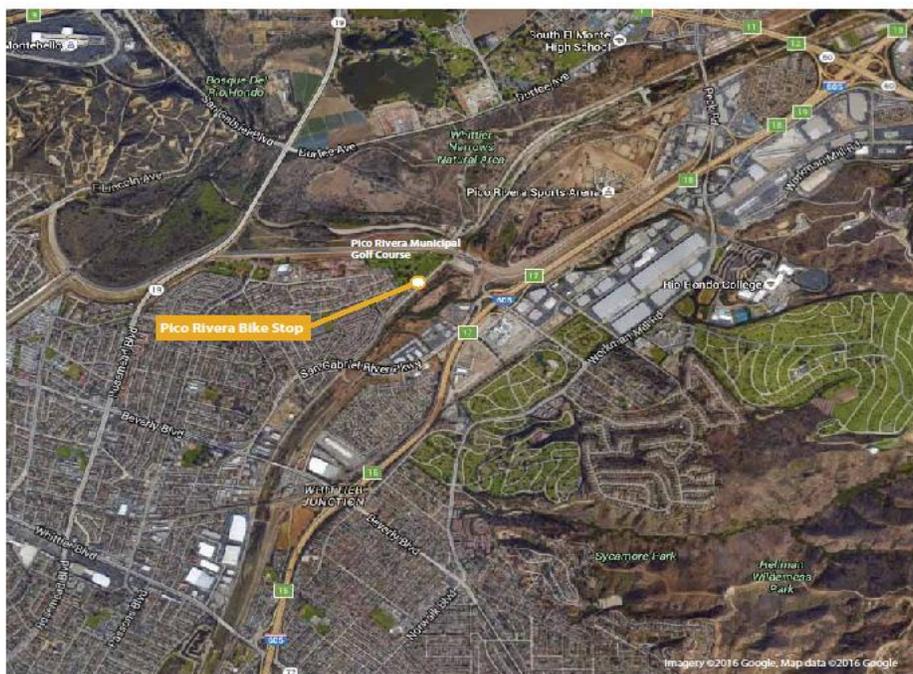
Monument. The workshop concluded in a panel discussion, highlighting the importance of regional collaboration through the development and implementation of a Monument transportation plan.

Watershed Conservation Authority Facebook: We are sharing happenings at WCA's offices at River Wilderness Park, with updates on our projects, partner and community events, and the occasional wildlife sighting. Friend us at Watershed Conservation Authority on Facebook.

WCA PROJECTS

Citrus Grove Heights Bike Stop: Two grants were awarded to the WCA to fund project implementation of a bike stop on the San Gabriel River in Pico Rivera, including an RMC grant and surplus funds from the Natural Resources Agency allocated through Proposition 12, which sunsets this June 2016. Project delays have extended the timeline beyond this period, resulting from changing requirements for ADA accessibility on all County Trails—requiring significant adjustments to the existing levy for site access—and the review process for US Army Corps and Flood Control approvals. To proactively manage this potential loss of funds staff has worked with the California Natural Resources Agency and partners to identify an alternate project site for immediate implementation of funds toward the original project scope of work.

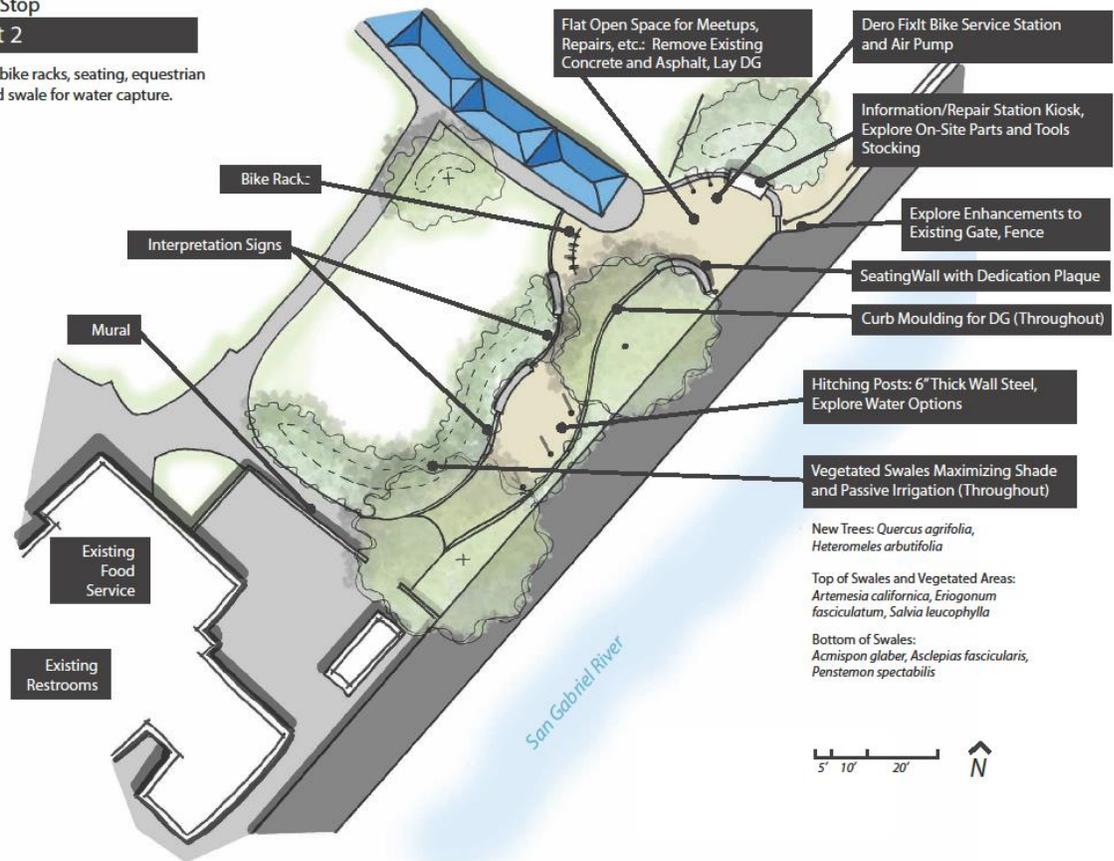
In collaboration with the City of Pico Rivera the WCA developed alternate design concepts and requests for services able to realize project elements for a new bike stop at the Municipal Golf Course (location below). Both the City property subcommittee and City Council approved a design concept (below) and City staff has continued working with a registered landscape architecture design firm selected from the WCA Request for Service (RFS) to incorporate project elements into implementation. The Natural Resources Agency has now transferred funds, and the project is expected to be completed by the June sunset period.



Pico Rivera Bike Stop

WCA Concept 2

Bike service station, bike racks, seating, equestrian posts, and vegetated swale for water capture.



The RMC grant funds will be allocated to complete construction drawings for the original site. Funds for implementation will be secured separately. These plans will include the same elements now also funded for the Pico Rivera Municipal Golf Course: prefabricated shade structure, bike service station, bike racks, hitching posts, interpretive site elements, seating areas, grading to capture water, and vegetation to provide habitat.

Duck Farm Project: Plans have been updated for County plan check comments are have been returned for what may be final approvals. SCE has approved the design package for work within their easement and have provided a consent letter to proceed with construction. Restroom facility comment pick-ups are in progress by Romtec, a pre-approved State vendor. Caltrans permit section is reviewing drawings for compliance with approval anticipated shortly. In the meantime, Caldrons has completed the install of a Metal Beam Guard Rail at the pedestrian entrance passageway at the site. Upon completion of permit plan check approvals a For Bid Package will be assemble and posted to start the bid and award process.

Emerald Necklace: The WCA is managing the Emerald Necklace Feasibility Study and Implementation Planning Project with the purpose of identifying trail connection and urban greening projects throughout a 17-mile loop in the heart of the San Gabriel Valley, bounded by the San Gabriel River to the East and Rio Hondo to the West. This work is being conducted in collaboration with members of the Emerald Necklace Coordination Committee, which includes staff from the RMC, Amigos de los Rios, County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation, Los Angeles Flood Control District, and County of Los Angeles First

Supervisorial District. As a product of this planning study a Implementation Plan will serve a guide for the coordinated implementation of these projects.

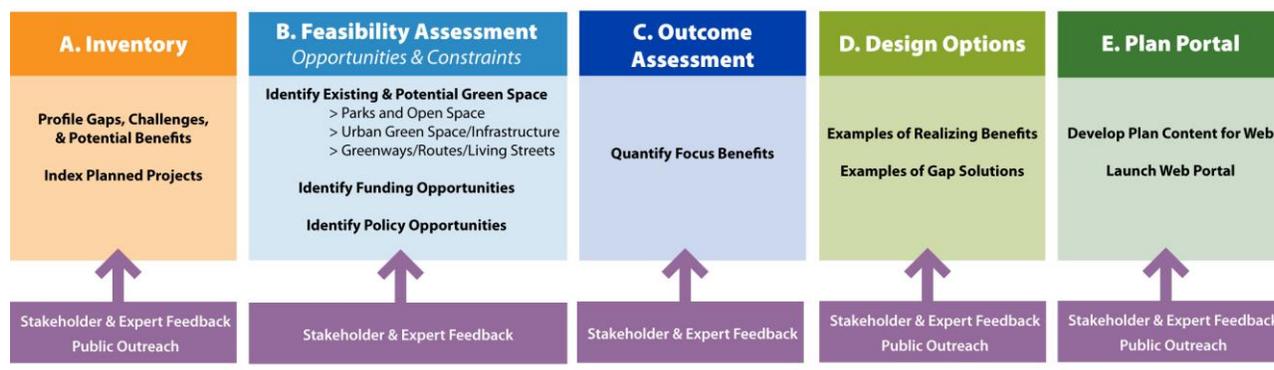
Since the last WCA Board meeting final descriptions of the Phase 1 Implementation Projects were created, and reviewed by the Emerald Necklace Coordination Committee. These include the following components for each project: description summary, figures and graphics, a discussion of signage, and a preliminary cost estimate. The environmental planning consultants are now in the process of conduction technical studies that will support the development of a Programmatic EIR, which will analyze and disclose the direct, indirect, cumulative environmental effect of these projects from a planning level review. Air, greenhouse gas, noise, and traffic reports were completed in April while updates to previously prepared biological and cultural resource reports are expected to be completed in early June.

Between June and early August both a draft Programmatic EIR and a draft Implementation Plan will be produced and reviewed with the Coordination Committee. A public review period is then planned between August and September, with a WCA certification hearing planned for January 2017.

Gateway Cities and Rivers Urban Greening Master Plan: With a grant from the Strategic Growth Council and partner collaboration the WCA is developing a visionary green infrastructure plan for the Gateway Cities Region. Working within an evolving framework the project team continues to review local and regional plans, collect relevant data, and conduct preliminary analyses to inventory existing conditions. Additionally, WCA staff is reviewing options to host the final plan online in a digital format for greater public dissemination, and to host our first online outreach campaign.

WCA staff successfully webhosted our first advisory committee meeting this Thursday April 28. The meeting was focused on a work plan (below), logistics for future meetings, and assessment approaches. Staff will continue to engage stakeholders, experts, Gateway COG, and cities in the development of assessments, outreach, and finishing the inventory phase this spring. Based on feedback meetings will be held quarterly on the third Tuesday of the month, the next to take place in July.

Gateway Greening Work Plan



River Wilderness Park Project (RWP): The RWP is an approx. 75.7 acre property slated to provide unique wilderness experiences in the lower San Gabriel River Canyon comprised of engaging landscapes,

gathering spaces, thriving habitats, and a regional hub and welcome center for the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument.

Based on the 2012 adopted RWP Master Plan for the Canyon Inn Property, WCA staff and consultants are currently preparing construction documents for the RWP Entry Improvements. Key benefits of this project include enhancing the park space, preserving ecologically significant land for the public, encouraging low-impact outdoor activities, and providing facilities to cultivate awareness, appreciation, and stewardship of our natural resources. A proposed open-air pavilion and interactive nature play area embodies these benefits as central parts of the plan to draw people into the park, providing enriching spaces to experience, and to engage the public in exploration.

During the Fall of 2015 draft project-level environmental analysis and documentation for the RWP Entry Improvements was prepared pursuant to the Californian Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) while also incorporate program-level review of all the proposed improvements on the Canyon Inn Property to study the cumulative impacts for the full development of the site. The resulting Programmatic Initial Study and Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration was released for public review on December 2, 2015 with a 30-day public review to solicit comments and input. To accommodate the holidays, one week was added to the public review period. Written comments were due to the WCA by January 7, 2015. Multiple agency comment letter were received. However no general public comments were submitted. WCA staff and the environmental consultant, ECORP are currently responding to comments and preparing a final document. Considered for adoption is scheduled for the June WCA meeting.

To fund these proposed improvements, WCA continues to prepared and submitted grant proposals. As a result of a September 2015 submittal to a call-for-projects by the California River Parkways, requesting \$299,862 to assist with the development of a bike path rest area and river overlook at the entrance to the park. Following today's WCA Board meeting, staff and key project partners will be joining members of the grant review team for a site visit. Although the process remains competitive, the site visit signifies that the proposal is within a short list to be recommended for funding. Awards are anticipated early July 2016.

An approx. \$1.4 million grant proposal is also being prepared in response to the call for project for Cycle 3 of the State Active Transpiration Program. With a similar proposal submitted last year narrowly missing the scoring threshold for funding, Metro has offered and staff as accepted the assistance of in-kind grant writing assistance provided through a transportation planning consultant, Stantec. Proposal submissions are due June 15, 2016.

San Gabriel Canyon Watershed Ranger Program: In continuation of the on-site public engagement program development by the San Gabriel Canyon Confluence with Cattle Canyon Improvements Project, the San Gabriel River Watershed Ranger program is gearing up to deploy a crew of six at-risk youth (and a crew leader) to conduct roaming outreach along high-use recreational corridors of the East, North, and West Forks of the San Gabriel River. Outreach will target the cumulative habitat impacts of trash and recreational uses (rock dam building) that results in stream modification. From Memorial Day Weekend, 2016 to Labor Day Weekend, 2016 Conservation corps members will be in the field making contact and speaking with the recreating public in a non-threatening manner about the importance of sustainable recreation, and to offer best management practices such as the Leave No Trace principles. Additional information about this project is provided under a separate agenda item.

San Gabriel River Confluence with Cattle Canyon Project: The Cattle Canyon Project seeks to address unsustainable recreation practices, which includes habitat disturbance from dispersed river-side

recreation along the East Fork of the San Gabriel River. Specific objectives of the project include: 1) promote stewardship of the public lands; 2) protect watershed ecosystems, including reducing creation and use of anthropogenic pools and onsite littering; 3) enhance quality of recreation, including adequate and safe access and additional public amenities; and 4) develop ecological restoration strategies, including restoration and enhancement of Angeles National Forest and San Gabriel Mountains National Monument.

The current Phase 1 of the Cattle Canyon Project, funded by the RMC, has seen the development of an outreach program focused on the prevention of specific harmful recreational behaviors. Two seasons of implementation have been completed during the Summers of 2013 and 2014. The remaining Phase 1 project component is the completion of a planning study. The study includes a comprehensive site assessment and conceptual planning process to identify opportunities for physical site improvements, as well as to a lesser extent, management considerations that will improve environmental conditions.

A final site plan, attached as Exhibit A, has been developed by project consultant team with guidance and review from WCA and Angeles National Forest staff members. A draft Concept Site Plan & Programming Report is currently in production, as well as the preparation of environmental documents CEQA/NEPA compliance. A public review period, and two public workshops are attentively planned for July. A final report and recommendation regarding CEQA compliance will subsequently be brought to the WCA. Completion of the site plan report and environmental documents review will complete Phase 1 of the Cattle Canyon Project. Further project development and implementation will then begin in Fall of 2016 with initial funding from the Angeles National Forest.

South Gate Habitat Restoration Project/Parque dos Rios: The project has received Caltrans approval to move existing gate system off their ROW and on to another State owned parcel. North East Trees, is in the process of completing the final plan update which will be submitted for City and Caltrans final approvals and encroachment permit, with maintenance agreement respectfully.

The City of South Gate completed the installation of the new water line on Imperial Highway to supply irrigation to the project. ACOE has given approval to run new water line along channel utilizing LACFCD uni-strut connection points. LACFCD has also approved the water line connection. An encroachment permit remains pending.

Walnut Creek Habitat & Open Space: Acquired in 2008, the Walnut Creek Habitat and Open Space Property is a total of approx. 60.8 acres. It is located directly east of Bonelli Regional Park and along the Walnut Creek riparian corridor. Approximately 6.7 acres are owned by the City of San Dimas and 54 acres are owned by the WCA.

A detailed presentation of this project is provided under a separate agenda item.

Exhibit A

SAN GABRIEL RIVER CONFLUENCE WITH CATTLE CANYON IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT FINAL CONCEPT SITE PLAN

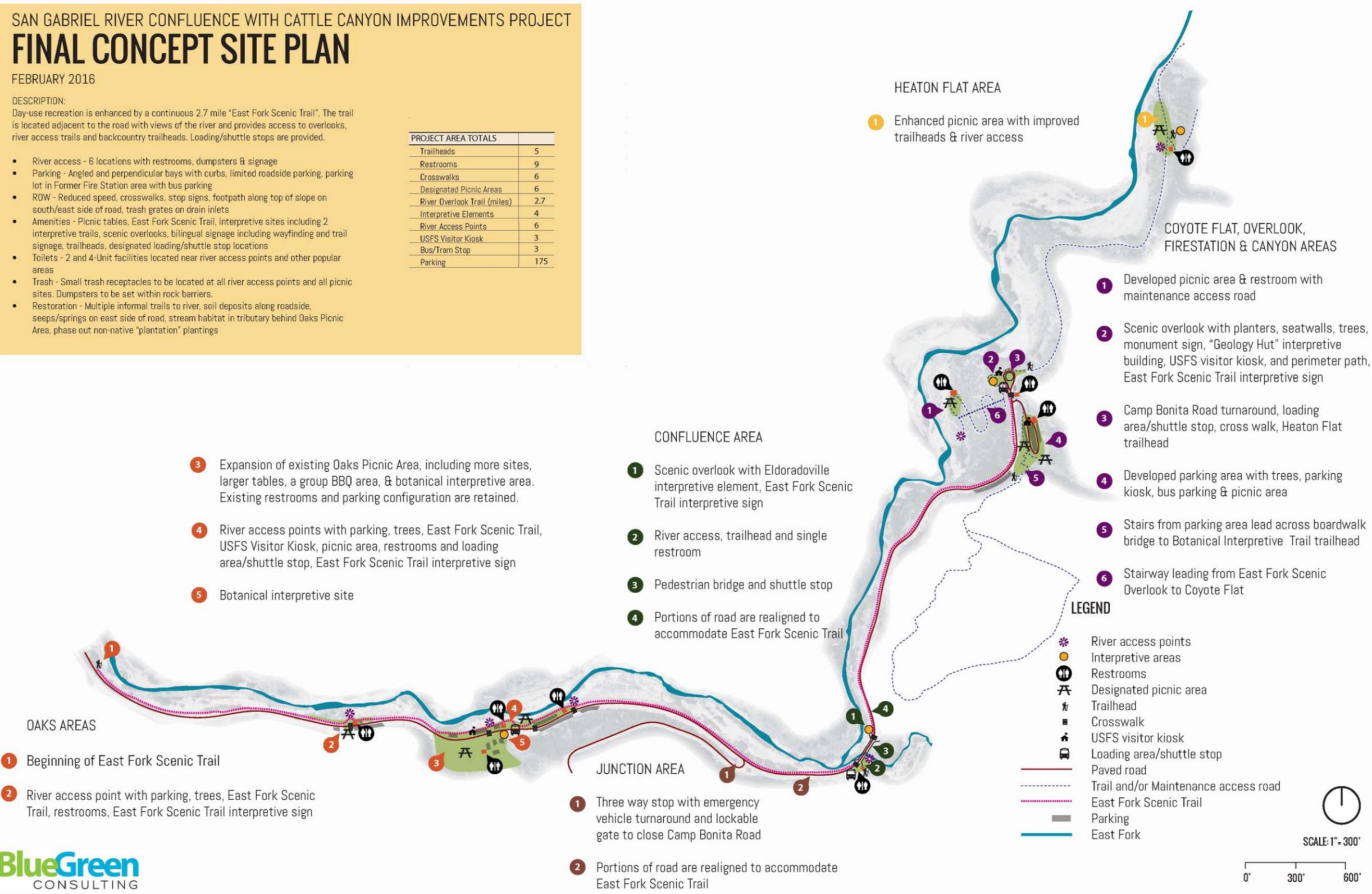
FEBRUARY 2016

DESCRIPTION:

Day-use recreation is enhanced by a continuous 2.7 mile "East Fork Scenic Trail". The trail is located adjacent to the road with views of the river and provides access to overlooks, river access trails and backcountry trailheads. Loading/shuttle stops are provided.

- River access - 6 locations with restrooms, dumpsters & signage
- Parking - Angled and perpendicular bays with curbs, limited roadside parking, parking lot in Former Fire Station area with bus parking
- ROW - Reduced speed, crosswalks, stop signs, footpath along top of slope on south/east side of road, trash grates on drain inlets
- Amenities - Picnic tables, East Fork Scenic Trail, interpretive sites including 2 interpretive trails, scenic overlooks, bilingual signage including wayfinding and trail signage, trailheads, designated loading/shuttle stop locations
- Toilets - 2 and 4-Unit facilities located near river access points and other popular areas
- Trash - Small trash receptacles to be located at all river access points and all picnic sites. Dumpsters to be set within rock barriers.
- Restoration - Multiple informal trails to river, soil deposits along roadside, seeps/springs on east side of road, stream habitat in tributary behind Oaks Picnic Area, phase out non-native "plantation" plantings

PROJECT AREA TOTALS	
Trailheads	5
Restrooms	9
Crosswalks	6
Designated Picnic Areas	6
River Overlook Trail (miles)	2.7
Interpretive Elements	4
River Access Points	6
USFS Visitor Kiosk	3
Bus/Tram Stop	3
Parking	175



- OAKS AREAS**
- 1 Beginning of East Fork Scenic Trail
 - 2 River access point with parking, trees, East Fork Scenic Trail, restrooms, East Fork Scenic Trail interpretive sign

- 3 Expansion of existing Oaks Picnic Area, including more sites, larger tables, a group BBQ area, & botanical interpretive area. Existing restrooms and parking configuration are retained.
- 4 River access points with parking, trees, East Fork Scenic Trail, USFS Visitor Kiosk, picnic area, restrooms and loading area/shuttle stop, East Fork Scenic Trail interpretive sign
- 5 Botanical interpretive site

- JUNCTION AREA**
- 1 Three way stop with emergency vehicle turnaround and lockable gate to close Camp Bonita Road
 - 2 Portions of road are realigned to accommodate East Fork Scenic Trail

- CONFLUENCE AREA**
- 1 Scenic overlook with Eldoradoville interpretive element, East Fork Scenic Trail interpretive sign
 - 2 River access, trailhead and single restroom
 - 3 Pedestrian bridge and shuttle stop
 - 4 Portions of road are realigned to accommodate East Fork Scenic Trail

- HEATON FLAT AREA**
- 1 Enhanced picnic area with improved trailheads & river access
- COYOTE FLAT, OVERLOOK, FIRESTATION & CANYON AREAS**
- 1 Developed picnic area & restroom with maintenance access road
 - 2 Scenic overlook with planters, seatwalls, trees, monument sign, "Geology Hut" interpretive building, USFS visitor kiosk, and perimeter path, East Fork Scenic Trail interpretive sign
 - 3 Camp Bonita Road turnaround, loading area/shuttle stop, cross walk, Heaton Flat trailhead
 - 4 Developed parking area with trees, parking kiosk, bus parking & picnic area
 - 5 Stairs from parking area lead across boardwalk bridge to Botanical Interpretive Trail trailhead
 - 6 Stairway leading from East Fork Scenic Overlook to Coyote Flat

LEGEND

- * River access points
- Interpretive areas
- ⊕ Restrooms
- ⊕ Designated picnic area
- ⊕ Trailhead
- ⊕ Crosswalk
- ⊕ USFS visitor kiosk
- ⊕ Loading area/shuttle stop
- Paved road
- - - Trail and/or Maintenance access road
- ⋯ East Fork Scenic Trail
- Parking
- East Fork

SCALE: 1" = 300'

0' 300' 600'