DATE: **June 16, 2016**

TO: **Watershed Conservation Authority Governing Board**

FROM: **Robert Romanek, Project Manager**

THROUGH: **Mark Stanley, Executive Officer**

SUBJECT: **Item 14: Consideration of: 1) a resolution approving and adopting a Programmatic Mitigated Negative Declaration and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan; and, 2) a resolution approving the Entry Improvements Project.**

RECOMMENDATION: That the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA): 1) approve and adopt a Programmatic Mitigated Negative Declaration and a Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan; and, 2) approve the Entry Improvements Project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The River Wilderness Park Canyon Inn Site is located in located in the northern portion of the City of Azusa, California. A location map is included as Exhibit A. In 2012, the WCA prepared the Canyon Inn Site Programming, Planning, and Concept Report to include improvements within the Canyon Inn Property. The final design plan is attached as Exhibit B.

Elements from Canyon Inn Site Phase I, and all of the components of Phases II and III, are known collectively as the Entry Improvements Projects. The Entry Improvements Projects is currently in design development with construction scheduled to begin in 2018 . These components are described in more detail below. The remaining elements of Phase I, identified as Future Projects, are the development of a Bike Path Underpass, Western Bank, Point Bar, The Triangle, and Azusa Springs. Though part of Phase I, these elements are proposed to be constructed at a later date.

The Entry Improvements Project Area is located south of the San Gabriel River between the El Encanto parking lot and State Route 39 (SR-39). The following Entry Improvements Projects elements would improve the entry to the Canyon Inn Property within the River Wilderness Park by:

- Constructing a roundabout to slow down vehicular travel along SR-39 at the entry to the Park at Old San Gabriel Canyon Road.
- Extending the San Gabriel River Bike Trail from its northern terminus along the west side of SR-39, across SR-39, and into the Park (originally planned as an alternative to extend to and under the SR-39 bridge).
- Installing water and sewer utility lines from the connection point at Mountain Laurel Way, along SR-39 to the realigned and improved Old San Gabriel Canyon Road.
- Undergrounding existing overhead electric utility lines and communications lines within the realigned and improved Old San Gabriel Canyon Road and within the project area.
- Constructing the following park amenities within the Canyon Inn Property:
    - Entry Gateway;
    - Park Signage;

    - Café/Office/Information Building;
    - Restrooms;
    - Pavilion;
    - Loop Nature Trail;
    - Bicycle Rest Stop;
    - Roundabout;
    - River Overlooks;
    - Shady Grove Picnic Facility; and
    - Adventure Play Area.
- Grading drainage improvements and vegetated swales.
- Landscape plantings and irrigation system.
- Realignment and improvement of approximately 900 feet of Old San Gabriel Canyon Road from SR-39 at the River Wilderness Park entry to the property boundary between Canyon Inn and El Encanto.
- Reconfiguring existing parking to accommodate park improvements.

A final design concept for Entry Improvements Project is attached as Exhibit C. Additionally, the existing septic tank located approximately where the Café/Office/Information building would be abandoned and removed per current guidelines. New sewer utility lines would be installed to serve the park.

The project elements located north of the San Gabriel River, identified as Future Projects, do not have a detailed capital funding strategy at this time and implementation timing and design are speculative. Therefore, these elements will be analyzed at a Program level. Once more project detail is known and the projects receive funding and further design, they will undergo separate CEQA review. A brief description of Future Projects elements is included below.

- Western Bank
    - Nature Trail
    - River Outlook
    - Habitat Restoration
    - Interpretive Sign
- Point Bar
    - Nature Trail
    - Habitat Restoration
    - River View Bench
- Azusa Springs
    - Tent Camping (by permit)
    - Nature Trail
    - Habitat Restoration
    - Interpretive Installations
- The Triangle
    - Habitat Restoration

BACKGROUND: The River Wilderness Park is envisioned as a large park consisting of several parcels including the El Encanto and Canyon Inn Properties. In 2007, the WCA adopted a Master Plan and IS/MND for the El Encanto Property as the first piece of the River Wilderness Park. In 2008, the WCA purchased the neighboring 26-acre Canyon Inn Property, formerly referred to as the Cool Springs Property, bringing the total River Wilderness Park site to approximately 68 acres. The purchase and site planning of the

Canyon Inn Property was funded on whole by the California Resources Agency with a $1,636,320 grant from the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) and $1,971,225 received from under the California River Parkway Grant Program. The property was acquired into public ownership to conserve the existing open space in perpetuity and provide appropriate low-impact recreational access.

Grant funds received from RMC allowed the WCA to conduct a planning process for the Canyon Inn Property. The priorities for the Canyon Inn planning effort were to integrate the Canyon Inn parcel into the River Wilderness Park, plan appropriate uses for all areas and to study the feasibility of extending the bike path under the Highway 39 Bridge and back up into the River Wilderness Park property near the current parking lot. The WCA staff and planning consultants were also charged with including revenue generating ideas into the plan. The planning team was tasked with the following:

1. Produce site plan, programming and site development for the Canyon Inn Property. The plan will be integrated with the existing park plans and adopted by the WCA as an addendum to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan.

2. Extend the San Gabriel River Bike Path into the River Wilderness Park, thereby creating a destination at the end of the bike path, and providing safe access to the park.

3. Conduct an inclusive stakeholder process.

4. Restore natural habitat.

5. Provide for recreational uses compatible with habitat sensitivity.

As with all WCA planning efforts extensive outreach utilizing individual, group and community meetings took place to inform and gather ideas from a wide variety of stakeholders from both government and private arenas. Beginning in late 2011 and extending into 2012 the planning consultants facilitated a public outreach program to solicit public input and guide the park planning effort. Stakeholders were engaged in one-on-one discussions, and a workshop with a fieldtrip was held to gain insight into opportunities, constraints and public opinions. A Steering Committee was assembled which consisted of the owner/client, public agencies with interests in the site, and stakeholders. Public agencies with direct interest in the property were invited to participate in the project steering committee. The Steering Committee met four times and had the opportunity to review materials prior to public outreach events. The steering committee was made up of representatives from the following agencies: WCA, City of Azusa, US Forest Service, Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, California Department of Transportation, California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The planning consultants also developed a community involvement program which engaged local residents, park users, and special interest groups. Postcards and fliers were used to notify the public about outreach meetings. A radius map and mailing list were prepared by the City of Azusa and two separate mailings notified residents about the park planning events. Three public outreach events were held. Two evening meetings were held at Azusa City Auditorium in May 2011 and the final plan was presented to the public on June 18, 2011 at the River Wilderness Park site.

The first public meeting provided a general background about the site and its potential uses. A virtual field trip with site photos helped participants better understand the complexities of the site. Sub-areas were delineated and named to facilitate discussion, and a broad range of possible uses were presented for each area. Questionnaires were then used to gauge public reaction to these suggestions, track likes and dislikes and to solicit additional suggestions for other possible uses. At the second public meeting, three

alternative plan concepts were presented based on the initial round of input. The public was asked to provide feedback on multiple components of each alternative. Additional ideas were solicited, and feedback was tracked and quantified. Input from the public meetings, the stakeholder workshop, and three Steering Committee meetings guided the design of the "Preferred Alternative." The "Preferred Alternative" was presented at the third public meeting, which was held on the morning of Saturday, June 18, 2011 at the River Wilderness Park site. Following the informal presentation, visitors were invited to tour the new land acquisition and discuss the proposed park development designs. This was the first event where the Canyon Inn & Azusa Springs areas were open to the public.

The WCA Board adopted the Canyon Inn Conceptual Plan and incorporated it into the River Wilderness Park Master Plan at the September 20, 2012 Board meeting. Staff subsequently identified the Entry Improvements Project as an initial stage of development necessary to prepare the park site for latter stages. In May of 2014 the RMC awarded and the WCA accepted an additional grant of $455,998 to complete CEQA review, schematic design, design development and permitting for the Entry Improvements Project. To complete this scope of work the services of Withers and Sandgren were retained in Summer of 2014. Construction plans and design specifications are currently at 60% development as geotechnical investigations are being completed to inform 90% plan development and subsequent permitting.

IDENTIFICATION AND DISCLOSURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS: The scope of services for Withers and Sandgren and its environmental sub-consultant, ECORP Consulting, Inc., included addressing and evaluation of the Concept Plan at a programmatic level of review as well as project-level review of the Entry Improvements Project. The analysis was patterned after the Initial Study Checklist recommended by the CEQA Guidelines and used in the environmental review process for potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

For the evaluation of potential impacts, the questions in the Initial Study Checklist are stated and answers are provided according to the analysis undertaken as part of the Initial Study. To each question, there are four possible responses:

- **No Impact.** The project will not have any measurable environmental impact on the environment.

- **Less Than Significant Impact.** The project will have the potential for impacting the environment, although this impact will be below established thresholds that are considered to be significant.

- **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** The project may have the potential to generate an impact which may be considered as a significant effect on the environment, although mitigation measures or changes to the development's physical or operational characteristics can reduce these impacts to levels that are less than significant.

- **Potentially Significant Impact.** The project may have an impact which is considered significant, and additional analysis is required to identify mitigation measures that could reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

The environmental factors checked below were evaluated and analyzed for the level of impact this project would have on these factors. Mitigation measures were then created to reduce the level to a less than significant impact.

	Aesthetics		Land Use and Planning
	Agriculture and Forest Resources		Mineral Resources
✓	Air Quality		Noise
✓	Biological Resources		Population and Housing
✓	Cultural Resources		Public Services
	Geology and Soils		Recreation
	Greenhouse Gas Emissions		Transportation/Traffic
✓	Hazards & Hazardous Materials		Utilities & Service Systems
	Hydrology & Water Quality		Mandatory Findings of Significance

The Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Master Plan was prepared as a combined Project and Program IS/MND. A Project IS/MND examines the environmental effects of a specific development project, while a Program IS/MND is prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related either geographically, as logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions, in connection with issuance of rules, regulations, plans or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program. The Entry Improvements Projects, as part of the Master Plan, are analyzed at the project level. Future Projects do not have a capital funding strategy at this time and implementation timing and design are speculative. Therefore, the Future Projects were analyzed at a program level. Once more project detail is known and the projects receive funding and further design, they will undergo the appropriate level CEQA review. The MND only analyzed the Entry Improvements Project at the Project level.

The Draft IS/MND was circulated for review and comment to the public, agencies, and organizations. Adjacent property owners were notified and a Notice of Intent to Adopt an IS/MND was filed with the County Clerk, distributed to adjacent property owners, and posted at Azusa City Hall, the WCA office and the WCA website. The Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration was also circulated to State agencies for review through the State Clearinghouse, Office of Planning and Research. The public review period ran from December 2, 2015 to January 7, 2016. An extension of the minimum 30-day review period was requested by the County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County and Californian Department of Fish and Wildlife, and was granted by the WCA with final comments received on January 15, 2016.

No written comments were received from residents or other members of the public during the review period. Written comments were received from the following agencies:

1. California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), January 6, 2016
2. City of Pasadena Water & Power Department, January 6, 2016
3. San Gabriel River Water Committee, January 7, 2016
4. County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, January 9, 2015
5. California Department of Fish and Wildlife, January 15, 2016

After the completion of the public/agency comment period for the Draft Programmatic IS/MND, minor changes were made to the Project Description and other sections of the Programmatic IS/MND. These revisions do not meet the criteria for recirculation of the MND prior to adoption, outlined in Section 15073.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines. As such, WCA staff has put forth a recommendation to adopt.

Section 5 of the Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration identifies the mitigation measures that will be implemented to reduce the impacts associated with the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River

Wilderness Park Master Plan. CEQA was amended in 1989 to add Section 21081.6, which requires a public agency to adopt a monitoring and reporting program for assessing and ensuring compliance with any required mitigation measures applied to proposed project. As stated in Public Resources Code Section 21081.6,

> *. . . the public agency shall adopt a reporting or monitoring program for the changes to the project which it has adopted, or made a condition of project approval, in order to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.*

Public Resources Code Section 21081.6 provides general guidelines for implementing mitigation monitoring programs and indicates that specific reporting and/or monitoring requirements, to be enforced during project implementation, shall be defined prior to adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

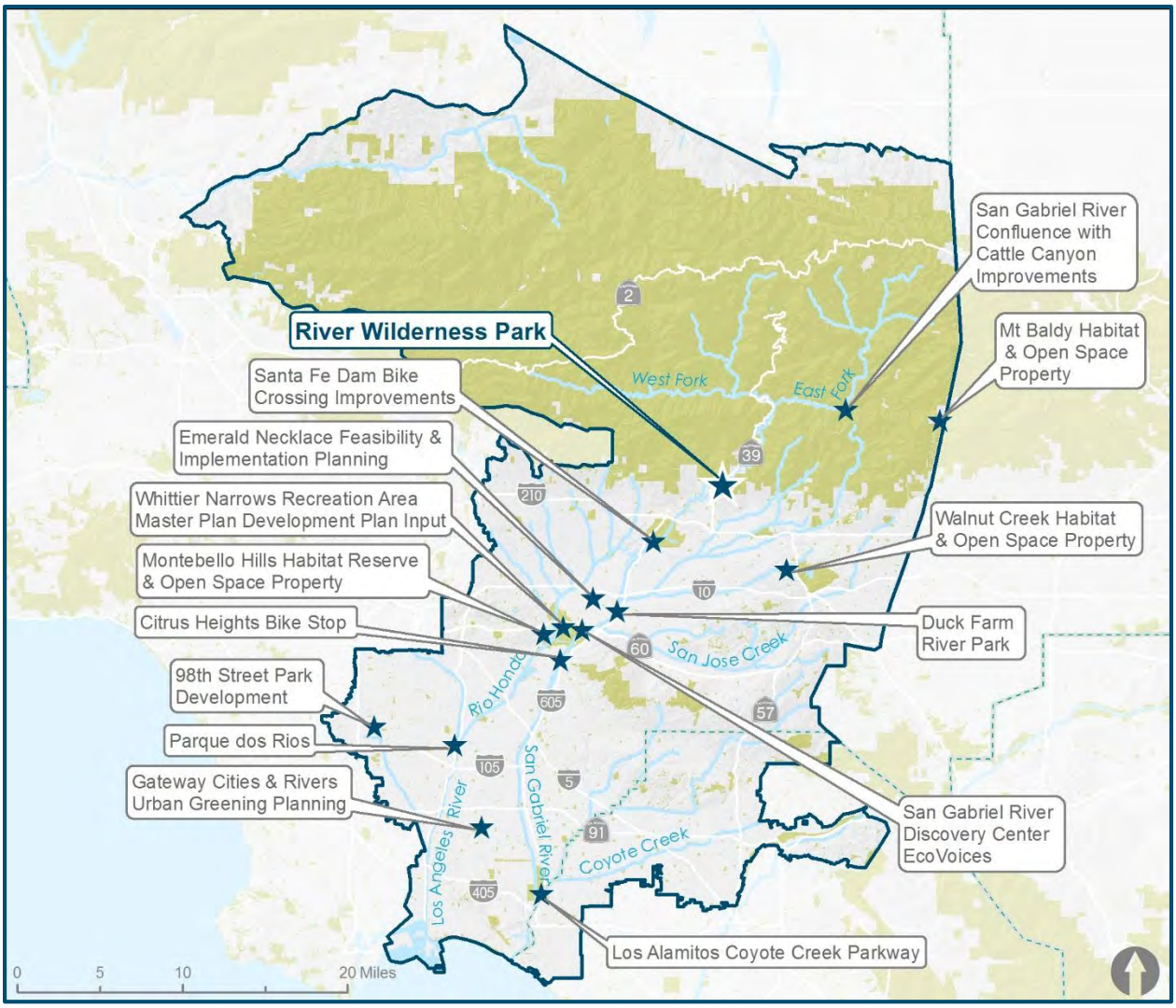
The Draft IS/MND is 94 pages in length, with an additional 443 pages of technical appendixes. In lieu of attaching this document, due to its size, it has been posted to the WCA's website and may be accessed as a PDF at www.wca.ca.gov/river_wilderness_park. The Final IS/MND, which includes agency comments and responses, revisions to the Draft IS/MND, and the Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan is attached as Exhibit D.

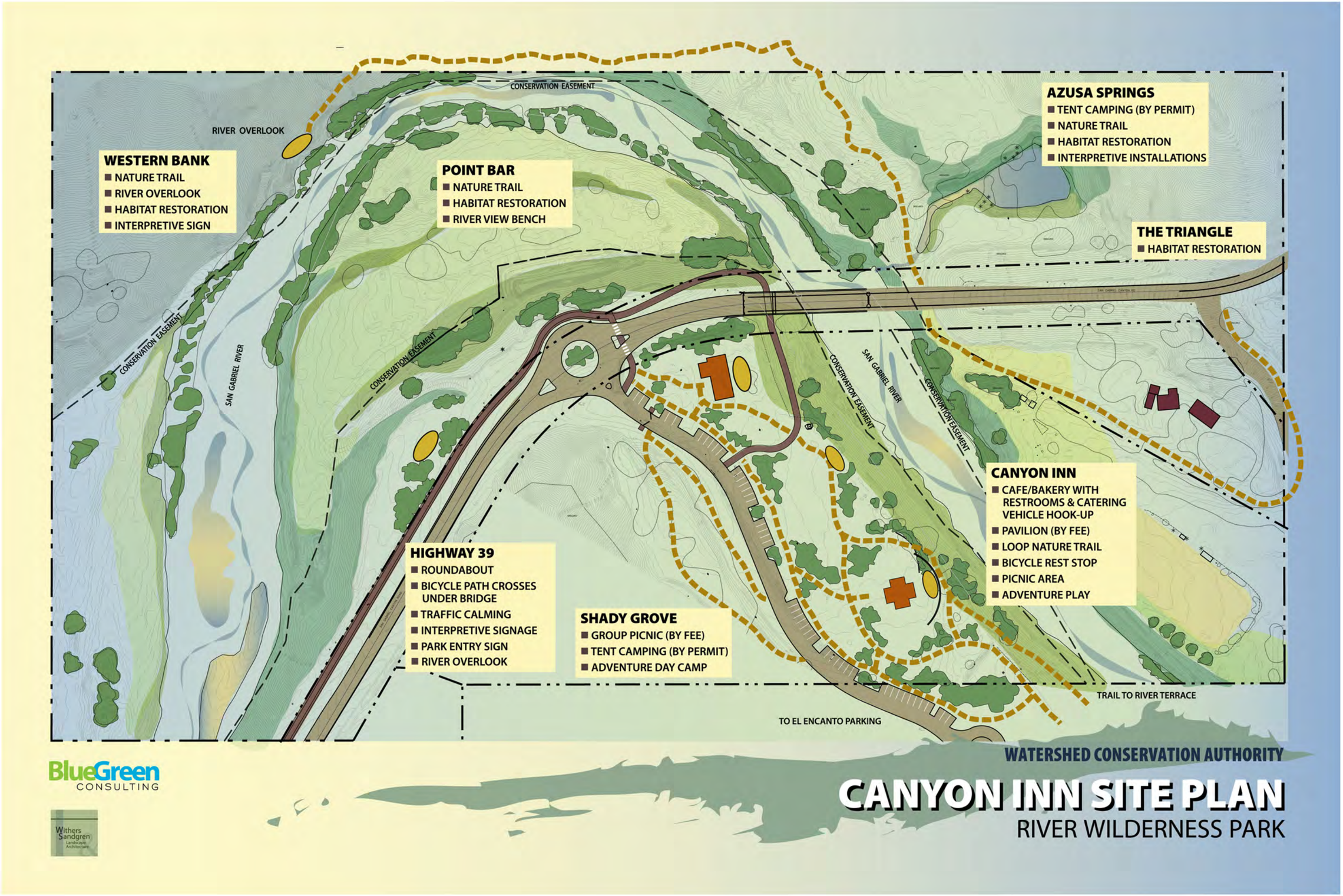
FISCAL INFORMATION: The proposed resolution to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan directs the Executive Officer, or designee, to file a Notice of Determination (NOD) within five (5) working days after approval of the Project, as required by CEQA Guidelines. There are costs associated with the filing of the NOD, including a mandatory filing fees levied by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife in the amount of $2,210.25 and a posting fee of $75.00 levied by the Los Angeles County Clerk. These fees total $2,285.25. WCA will use RMC grant funds for these costs in accordance with the adopted FY 15/16 budget.

The total estimated cost to implement the Entry Improvement Project is estimated at approximately $8 million. To fund construction, four grant proposals have been submitted by the WCA between June 1, 2015 and June 10, 2016. These include application to the RMC Prop 1 Grant Program ($1,590,000 request), 2015 California River Parkway Grant Program ($299,862 request), the California Active Transportation Program Cycle 3 ($1,932,000 request), and the 2015 Countywide Competitive Proposition A Grant Program which was selected for a $997,000 award. Determination of awards under the 2015 California River Parkway Grant Program and California Active Transportation Program Cycle 3 are pending. Staff continues to seek out other funding opportunity to complete the current gap in funding of up to $3 million.

Watershed Conservation Authority

River Wilderness Park




CONSERVATION EASEMENT
RIVER OVERLOOK
WESTERN BANK
NATURE TRAIL
RIVER OVERLOOK
HABITAT RESTORATION
INTERPRETIVE SIGN
POINT BAR
NATURE TRAIL
HABITAT RESTORATION
RIVER VIEW BENCH
AZUSA SPRINGS
TENT CAMPING (BY PERMIT)
NATURE TRAIL
HABITAT RESTORATION
INTERPRETIVE INSTALLATIONS
THE TRIANGLE
HABITAT RESTORATION
CONSERVATION EASEMENT
SAN GABRIEL RIVER
CONSERVATION EASEMENT
CONSERVATION EASEMENT
SAN GABRIEL RIVER
CONSERVATION EASEMENT
CANYON INN
CAFE/BAKERY WITH RESTROOMS & CATERING VEHICLE HOOK-UP
PAVILION (BY FEE)
LOOP NATURE TRAIL
BICYCLE REST STOP
PICNIC AREA
ADVENTURE PLAY
HIGHWAY 39
ROUNDABOUT
BICYCLE PATH CROSSES UNDER BRIDGE
TRAFFIC CALMING
INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE
PARK ENTRY SIGN
RIVER OVERLOOK
SHADY GROVE
GROUP PICNIC (BY FEE)
TENT CAMPING (BY PERMIT)
ADVENTURE DAY CAMP
TRAIL TO RIVER TERRACE
TO EL ENCANTO PARKING
BlueGreen CONSULTING
Withers Sandgren Landscape Architecture
WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
CANYON INN SITE PLAN
RIVER WILDERNESS PARK

EXTENDED BICYCLE PATH

ROUNDABOUT

MONUMENT SIGN

ENTRY GATE

REALIGNED ROADWAY

CLUSTERED PARKING

GROUP PICNICKING & TENT CAMPING (BY PERMIT)

INTERPRETIVE TRAIL

WITHERS & SANDGREN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE + PLANNING

0 15 30 60

1" = 30'

RIVER WILDERNESS PARK ENTRY IMPROVEMENTS

CANYON INN SUPPLEMENT TO THE RIVER WILDERNESS PARK MASTER PLAN

FINAL PROGRAMMATIC INITIAL STUDY/ MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

AND

RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

State Clearinghouse Number
2015121010

March 2016

Lead Agency:

Watershed Conservation Authority
100 North Old San Gabriel Canyon Road
Azusa, CA 91702

Prepared by:

ECORP Consulting, Inc.
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS
215 N. Fifth Street
Redlands, CA 92374

CANYON INN SUPPLEMENT TO THE RIVER WILDERNESS PARK MASTER PLAN

Final

Programmatic Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

State Clearinghouse Number 2015121010

March 2016

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PROGRAM MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
CANYON INN SUPPLEMENT TO THE RIVER WILDERNESS PARK MASTER PLAN

Lead Agency: Watershed Conservation Authority

Project Proponent: Watershed Conservation Authority

Project Description: The WCA is proposing to complete the proposed objectives of the Canyon Inn Master Plan (Proposed Project) in three phases through 2028. Implementation of the Master Plan is dependent on acquiring the necessary funds to design and construct an individual or group of project elements. Sufficient detail is known about the projects to be implemented beginning in 2017 so that these projects can be discussed in detail at the Project IS/MND level. However, details of projects that would be implemented in the later stages become speculative in terms of timing and design. These projects are discussed at the Program IS/MND level.

Elements from Phase I, and all of the project components of Phases II and III, are known collectively as the Entry Improvements Projects. The Entry Improvements Projects have a funding plan for construction scheduled to begin in 2017 and are analyzed at a Project level. These components are described in more detail below. The remaining elements of Phase I: Bike Path Underpass, Western Bank, Point Bar, The Triangle, and Azusa Springs, though part of Phase I, would be constructed at a later date. These projects are known collectively as Future Projects, and are analyzed at a Program level. Additional information on these elements is provided below. Subsequent California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review would be required when the remaining elements are scheduled for development.

The Entry Improvements Project Area is located south of the San Gabriel River between the El Encanto parking lot and State Route 39 (SR-39). The following Entry Improvements Project elements would improve the entry to the Canyon Inn Property within the River Wilderness Park by:

- Constructing a roundabout to slow down vehicular travel along SR-39 at the entry to the River Wilderness Park (Park) at Old San Gabriel Canyon Road.
- Extending the San Gabriel River Bike Trail from its northern terminus along the west side of SR-39, across SR-39, and into the Park (originally planned as an alternative to extend to and under the SR-39 bridge).
- Installing water and sewer utility lines from the connection point at Mountain Laurel Way, along SR-39 to the realigned and improved Old San Gabriel Canyon Road.
- Undergrounding existing overhead electric utility lines and communications lines within the realigned and improved Old San Gabriel Canyon Road and within the project area.
- Constructing the following park amenities within the Canyon Inn Property:
    - Entry Gateway;
    - Park Signage;
    - Café/Office/Information Building;
    - Restrooms;
    - Pavilion;
    - Loop Nature Trail;
    - Bicycle Rest Stop;
    - Roundabout;
    - River Overlooks;
    - Shady Grove Picnic Facility; and
    - Adventure Play Area.

- Grading drainage improvements and vegetated swales.
- Landscape plantings and irrigation system.
- Realignment and improvement of approximately 900 feet of Old San Gabriel Canyon Road from SR-39 at the Park entry to the property boundary between Canyon Inn and El Encanto.
- Reconfiguring existing parking to accommodate park improvements.

The existing abandoned septic tank located approximately where the Café/Office/Information building currently is located would be abandoned and removed per current guidelines. New sewer utility lines would be installed to serve the Park.

The project elements located north of the San Gabriel River, identified as Future Projects, do not have a detailed capital funding strategy at this time and implementation timing and design are speculative. Therefore, these elements will be analyzed at a Program level. Once more project detail is known and the projects receive funding and further design, they will undergo separate CEQA review. A brief description of Future Projects elements is included below.

- **Western Bank**
  - Nature Trail
  - River Outlook
  - Habitat Restoration
  - Interpretive Sign

- **Point Bar**
  - Nature Trail
  - Habitat Restoration
  - River View Bench

- **Azusa Springs**
  - Tent Camping (by permit)
  - Nature Trail
  - Habitat Restoration
  - Interpretive Installations

- **The Triangle**
  - Habitat Restoration

Public Review Period: December 2, 2015 to January 7, 2016

Mitigation Measures Incorporated into the Project to Avoid Significant Effects:

Air Quality

Mitigation Measure

AQ-1: During construction activity, all construction equipment (≥ 150 horsepower) shall be California Air Resources Board (CARB) Tier 3 certified or better. Additionally, during grading activity, total horsepower-hours per day for all equipment shall not exceed 14,864 horsepower-hours per day and the maximum disturbance (actively graded area) shall not exceed 4 acres per day.

Biological Resources

Mitigation Measures

B-1: To ensure compliance with Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and Section 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code, and to avoid any potential impacts to special-status bird species that may occur in the project vicinity, construction activities shall be conducted outside the bird nesting bird season (March 15 to September 15) to avoid any potential disturbance of avian breeding activities. If vegetation removal, clearing, and/or grading for the Proposed Project (i.e. impacting ornamental vegetation) is conducted during the bird nesting season (March 15 to September 15), then construction will be limited in the vicinity of any active nests per the recommendations of a qualified biologist. Three days prior to the onset of construction activities, a qualified biologist shall survey disturbance for the presence of any active bird nests within the limits of the project. If no active nests are found, no further mitigation would be required. However, any active nest found during survey efforts shall be mapped on the construction plans, and an appropriate buffer area (typically 200 feet in every direction) shall be established around any active nest. Encroachment into the buffer area shall only be allowed if the proposed activity shall not disturb the nest occupants. Construction within the buffer area may resume after a qualified biologist has determined that fledglings have left the nest.

B-2: If construction will occur between April and August, then protocol surveys for least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher shall take place prior to project commencement. Protocol surveys for the least Bell's vireo entail eight surveys, spaced 10 days apart, from April 10 through July 31. Protocol surveys for the southwestern willow flycatcher entail five surveys, with one survey from May 15 through May 31, two surveys from June 1 through June 24, and two surveys from June 24 through July 17. For initiation of any regulatory permitting process for either of these species, protocol surveys would be necessary.

Mitigation for impacts (direct or indirect) will be determined during the permitting process with the regulatory agencies. If potential (direct or indirect) impacts to southwestern willow flycatcher and least Bell's vireo are identified during construction of the project, Section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will determine appropriate mitigation. Mitigation measures may include avoidance of impacts during the breeding season (seasonal work restrictions), implementation of construction noise and dust minimization measures, or biological monitoring.

B-3: Prior to the construction of any phase or component of the project that involves impacting drainages, or wetlands through filling, stockpiling, conversion to a storm drain, channelization, bank stabilization, road or utility line crossings, or any other modification to a jurisdictional drainage, a jurisdictional delineation shall be conducted. Any jurisdictional impacts would require permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and Los Angeles Region Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) before any development could commence. Project specific mitigation for impacts to features jurisdictional to state and federal agencies will be determined during the wetland permitting process. Mitigation could include land conservation and management in perpetuity, on-site habitat enhancement and restoration, payment of in-lieu fees to authorized conservation organizations, or a combination of these measures.

Cultural Resources

Mitigation Measures

CR-1: If archaeological resources are encountered during grading, construction activities in the area of the find shall be immediately suspended and the resource left in place until a qualified archaeologist can examine it and determine appropriate mitigation measures in accordance with the provisions of CEQA Section 15064.5. The archaeologist shall complete any requirements for the mitigation of adverse effects on any resources determined to be significant and implement appropriate treatment measures.

CR-2: If paleontological resources are encountered during grading, construction activities in the area of the find shall be immediately suspended, the resource must be left in place until a qualified paleontologist can examine it and determine appropriate mitigation measures.

CR-3: If human remains are encountered during grading, construction activities in the area of the find must be immediately halted and the Los Angeles County coroner must be notified within 24 hours of the discovery (California Health and Safety Code §7050.5). If the coroner determines that the remains are not recent, the coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for consultation (Public Resources Code §5097.98). The NAHC will designate a Most Likely Descendant who will make recommendations concerning reassignment of the remains in consultation with the lead agency and Project Archaeologist.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Mitigation Measures

HAZ-1: The WCA shall implement the following fire prevention measures during construction and operation, as applicable:

- Prevent the establishment or control invasive plant species that can increase the risk of fire;
- Prohibit smoking within the park;
- Prohibit all persons from lighting or maintaining fire of any kind, unless permit has been issued by the Watershed Conservation Authority;
- Prohibit the use of powered hobby motors and rockets that utilize a combustive fuel or rocket motor;
- Prohibit the use of power tools during periods of high and very high fire hazards;
- Limit public use of the park on red flag or high fire risk days, as determined by the National Weather Service or any other governmental agency;
- Limit driving on undeveloped areas to maintenance and emergency vehicles;
- During periods of high and very high fire hazard, prohibit the driving of maintenance vehicles into undeveloped areas of the property except for emergencies.

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

This document is the Final Programmatic Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (Final IS/MND), including the Responses to Comments and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, for the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan (Proposed Project). It has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resource Code Section 21000 et. seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Section 15000 et seq.), as amended. This Final Programmatic IS/MND and Responses to Comments document supplements and updates the Draft Programmatic Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (Draft IS/MND) released for public review on December 2, 2015.

The Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) is the Lead Agency for the Proposed Project. On December 2, 2015 the WCA distributed the Draft Programmatic IS/MND for the Proposed Project to the State Clearinghouse. In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines, a 30-day review period, which ended on January 7, 2016, was completed. During the public review period six comment letters were received.

This Final Programmatic IS/MND and Responses to Comments document is organized as follows:

- Section 1.0 provides a discussion of the purpose of the document and discusses the structure of the document;
- Section 2.0 contains a summary of the Project Description, a description of minor changes to the Project Description, and a discussion regarding why these changes do not require recirculation of the Draft Programmatic IS/MND;
- Section 3.0 includes the comment letters received and responses to these comments;
- Section 4.0 includes corrections and revisions made to the Draft Programmatic IS/MND in response to comments and a discussion regarding why these changes do not require recirculation for the Draft Programmatic IS/MND; and
- Section 5.0 includes the Proposed Project's Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP), prepared pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081.6.

The Draft Programmatic IS/MND is incorporated into this document by reference. This Final Programmatic IS/MND and the Draft Programmatic IS/MND together constitute the environmental document for the Proposed Project.

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SECTION 2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

2.1 Project Location

The Proposed Project is located along the San Gabriel River in the City of Azusa, near the mouth of San Gabriel Canyon on San Gabriel Canyon Road (SR-39).

2.2 Project Summary

The WCA is proposing to complete the proposed objectives of the Canyon Inn Master Plan (Proposed Project) in three phases through 2028. Implementation of the Master Plan is dependent on acquiring the necessary funds to design and construct an individual or group of project elements. Sufficient detail is known about the projects to be implemented beginning in 2017 so that these projects can be discussed in detail at the Project IS/MND level. However, details of projects that would be implemented in the later stages become speculative in terms of timing and design. These projects are discussed at the Program IS/MND level.

Elements from Phase I, and all of the project components of Phases II and III, are known collectively as the Entry Improvements Projects. The Entry Improvements Projects have a funding plan for construction scheduled to begin in 2017 and are analyzed at a Project level. These components are described in more detail below. The remaining elements of Phase I: Bike Path Underpass, Western Bank, Point Bar, The Triangle, and Azusa Springs, though part of Phase I, would be constructed at a later date. These projects are known collectively as Future Projects, and are analyzed at a Program level. Additional information on these elements is provided below. Subsequent California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review would be required when the remaining elements are scheduled for development.

The Entry Improvements Project Area is located south of the San Gabriel River between the El Encanto parking lot and State Route 39 (SR-39). The following Entry Improvements Project elements would improve the entry to the Canyon Inn Property within the River Wilderness Park by:

- Constructing a roundabout to slow down vehicular travel along SR-39 at the entry to the Park at Old San Gabriel Canyon Road.
- Extending the San Gabriel River Bike Trail from its northern terminus along the west side of SR-39, across SR-39, and into the Park (originally planned as an alternative to extend to and under the SR-39 bridge).
- Installing water and sewer utility lines from the connection point at Mountain Laurel Way, along SR-39 to the realigned and improved Old San Gabriel Canyon Road.
- Undergrounding existing overhead electric utility lines and communications lines within the realigned and improved Old San Gabriel Canyon Road and within the project area.
- Constructing the following park amenities within the Canyon Inn Property:
    - Entry Gateway;
    - Park Signage;
    - Café/Office/Information Building;
    - Restrooms;
    - Pavilion;
    - Loop Nature Trail;
    - Bicycle Rest Stop;
    - Roundabout;
    - River Overlooks;
    - Shady Grove Picnic Facility; and
    - Adventure Play Area

- Grading drainage improvements and vegetated swales.
- Landscape plantings and irrigation system.
- Realignment and improvement of approximately 900 feet of Old San Gabriel Canyon Road from SR-39 at the Park entry to the property boundary between Canyon Inn and El Encanto.
- Reconfiguring existing parking to accommodate park improvements.

The existing abandoned septic tank located approximately where the Café/Office/Information building would be abandoned and removed per current guidelines. New sewer utility lines would be installed to serve the Park.

The project elements located north of the San Gabriel River, identified as Future Projects, do not have a detailed capital funding strategy at this time and implementation timing and design are speculative. Therefore, these elements will be analyzed at a Program level. Once more project detail is known and the projects receive funding and further design, they will undergo separate CEQA review. A brief description of Future Projects elements is included below.

- **Western Bank**
  - Nature Trail
  - River Outlook
  - Habitat Restoration
  - Interpretive Sign
- **Point Bar**
  - Nature Trail
  - Habitat Restoration
  - River View Bench
- **Azusa Springs**
  - Tent Camping (by permit)
  - Nature Trail
  - Habitat Restoration
  - Interpretive Installations
- **The Triangle**
  - Habitat Restoration

SECTION 3. COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

This section of the document contains copies of the comment letters received during the 30-day public review period, which began on December 2, 2015 and ended on January 7, 2016. In conformance with Section 15088(a) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the WCA has considered comments on five letters received during the review period. Additionally, a letter from the State Clearinghouse, acknowledging that the WCA has complied with review requirements, was received. These letters, and the responses to the comments contained in the letters, are provided in this section.

A list of public agencies, organizations, and individuals that provided comments on the Draft Programmatic IS/MND is presented below. The letters and the responses to the comments follow this page.

3.1 List of Comment Letters

Letter Number	Sender	Date Received
1	California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)	01/06/2016
2	City of Pasadena Water & Power Department (PWP)	01/06/2016
3	San Gabriel River Water Committee	01/07/2016
4	Governor's Office of Planning and Research (State Clearinghouse)	01/07/2016
5	County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (Districts)	01/09/2016
6	California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)	01/15/2016

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Letter 1 – California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), January 6, 2016

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY EDMUND G. BROWN, JR.
Governor

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 7, OFFICE OF REGIONAL PLANNING
IGR/CEQA BRANCH
100 MAIN STREET, MS # 16
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012-3606
PHONE: (213) 897-0219
FAX: (213) 897-1337

RECEIVED
IN16 - 19
JAN 06 2016
WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Serious drought
Help save water!

January 6, 2016

Mr. Rob Romanek
Watershed Conservation Authority
100 Old San Gabriel Canyon Road
Azusa, CA 91702

Re: River Wilderness Park Master Plan
Vic: LA-039/ PM 17.812
IGR# 151208ME-ND

Dear Mr. Romanek:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the proposed River Wilderness Park Master Plan.

The Watershed Conservation Authority is proposing to complete the proposed objectives of the Canyon Inn Master Plan in three phases through 2028. Implementation of the Master Plan is dependent on acquiring the necessary funds to design and construct an individual or group of project elements. However, details of projects that would be implemented in the later stages become speculative in terms of timing and design.

The Entry Improvements Project Area is located south of the San Gabriel River between the El Encanto parking lot and State Route 39 (SR-39). For any work related to SR 39, including the planned roundabout, will require Caltrans review and approval.

Please continue to keep us informed of this project and any future developments, which could potentially impact State Transportation Facilities. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact project coordinator Miya Edmonson, at (213) 897-6536 and refer to IGR/CEQA No 151208ME. **1-1**

Sincerely,

DIANNA WATSON
IGR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse

"Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability"

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Letter 1 Responses to Comments

This letter is an acknowledgement that the California Department of Transportation has reviewed the Proposed Project's IS/MND.

Response to Comment 1-1

This comment notes that any work occurring along SR-39, including the planned roundabout, should be submitted to the California Department of Transportation for review and approval. Additionally, any future developments within the River Wilderness Park Master Plan that could potentially impact State Transportation Facilities, should also be submitted to the Caltrans for review and approval. The WCA will continue to coordinate with Caltrans regarding any Project work along SR-39.

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Letter 2 – City of Pasadena Water & Power Department (PWP), January, 6 2016

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INIG-25
JAN 06 2016
WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

PASADENA WATER AND POWER
POWER SUPPLY BUSINESS UNIT

January 6, 2016

Mr. Rob Romanek
Watershed Conservation Authority
100 Old San Gabriel Canyon Road
Azusa, CA 91702

RE: CEQA Notice of Intent to Adopt an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the "**Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan;"** located along the San Gabriel River in the City of Azusa, near the mouth of San Gabriel Canyon on San Gabriel Canyon Road (SR-39).

Dear Mr. Romanek,

The City of Pasadena Water & Power Department (PWP) owns and operates the (Historical-first went in operation in 1898) Azusa Conduit since 1929. This conduit delivers water flow from behind the San Gabriel Dam and Morris Dam through thirty-four tunnels in the Glendora Mountains to the Azusa Hydro Power Plant, City of Azusa Water Filtration Plant, Covina Irrigation Company Filtration Plant and settling ponds in the area. The Azusa Hydro Power Plant is located at 1850 Ranch Road, Azusa, CA 91702. Following are the City's concerns and requests regarding the above referenced Master Plan and related construction:

1. As it is the only access to this section of the conduit, PWP requests access through the proposed Canyon Inn Property Entry Gateway to allow personnel to have access 24/7 to the Azusa Conduit. **2-1**

85 E. State Street · Pasadena, CA 91105-3418
Office (626) 744-6243 · Fax (626) 744-4491

Letter 2 – Continued

2. The proposed San Gabriel Canyon Road (SR-39) roundabout next to the Canyon Inn Property will still need to allow heavy, oversized equipment to pass for maintenance and repair to the Azusa Conduit. **2-2**

3. In the event regrading of the mountain slope is proposed near the former El Encanto Restaurant site, there could be a potential negative impact to the Azusa Conduit, since it is located immediately above. In this case, the conduit needs to be protected in place, including appropriate considerations for slope integrity and future hillside maintenance. **2-3**

If you have any questions about this response to your request, please do not hesitate to contact me at (626) 744-4568.

Art Silva
Power Plant Manager

Cc: Bill Pascarella

Attachment: Azusa Conduit Overhead view

Letter 2 Responses to Comments

This letter is an acknowledgement that the City of Pasadena Water and Power Department has reviewed the Proposed Project's IS/MND.

Response to Comment 2-1

This comment requests access through the proposed Canyon Inn Property Gateway Entry to allow PWP access to the Azusa Conduit. The WCA is not proposing to limit PWP access. Designs for the Front Entry include a Park perimeter fence and gate. Park operating hours would be from sunrise to sunset. The gate would be open during operating hours and closed after hours as part of normal park operations. Although Park operating hours will be from sunrise to sunset, the WCA would provide access through the site to PWP 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Response to Comment 2-2

This comment requests that the roundabout be designed to allow for use of heavy and oversized equipment needed to maintain the Azusa Conduit. The Proposed San Gabriel Canyon Road (SR-39) roundabout would be designed per Caltrans state transportation facility guidelines and standards to allow for use by heavy and oversized equipment.

Response to Comment 2-3

This comments notes the concern that any grading of the hillside near the former El Encanto Restaurant site may affect the Azusa Conduit. Based on the review of the location of the Azusa Conduit, the proposed entry improvements and future improvements would not affect the Azusa Conduit due to lack of proximity to the feature. The Canyon Inn Master Plan does not propose any grading of the hillside near the El Encanto Restaurant site.

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Letter 3 – San Gabriel River Water Committee, January, 7 2016

SAN GABRIEL RIVER WATER COMMITTEE
729 N. Azusa Ave. #5
Azusa, CA 91702-2528
(COMMITTEE OF NINE) *FOUNDED 1889*

January 7, 2016

Mr. Rob Romanek
Watershed Conservation Authority
100 Old San Gabriel Canyon Road
Azusa, CA 91702

Re: Draft Initial Study & Mitigated Negative Declaration / River Wilderness Park Azusa

Dear Mr. Romanek:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the draft mitigated negative declaration. San Gabriel River Water Committee has an abundant interest in this project in that our water supply comes from canyon dams upstream of your proposed project. The State Regional Water Quality Control Board has been very helpful in the past to insure there is no degradation of this water source. This supply is crucial to meeting the needs of our customers. Additionally water originating from a location upstream is also used to replenish the underground aquifers and is a critical operation for the water supply health of the San Gabriel Valley. Import water has been in very limited supply and continues to become more limited. We would like to think that you are already aware of these facts and have considered our existing rights and have incorporated them into this plan. Your plan in general appears to be a good plan and should greatly improve the area. We need assurance that our rights will be maintained and therefore the Committee has the following comments:

During the construction/grading phases, because of loosened soil, runoff from the site should not be allowed into the river. This could cause high turbidity levels to the two filter plants and to the spreading operations downstream. This is of particular concern since it is stated that herbicide applications will occur and could also be washed into the river. **3-1**

No gas powered vehicles or motors should be allowed in contact with the river water as this can result in leakage or spills. **3-2**

In the Azusa Springs Area tent camping is proposed by permit. We are concerned that although you will know who has been issued a permit, that this activity may not be properly monitored for such activities as illegal camp fires or illegal trash/waste disposal. Will you suspend this activity in the event tent camping becomes a problem? **3-3**

Another concern we have is that the section of bike path from the roundabout to the Concession building should be monitored at all times and properly maintained. Are recording cameras planned for this location as well as the rest of the Canyon Inn Site? Will the wilderness park be closed at night and properly secured or will there be someone on site at all times for security and to restrict illegal activities? **3-4**

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your proposal.

Mr. David DeJesus, Chairperson

OFFICE (626) 815-0018 sgrwc@aol.com FAX (626) 334-3163

AZUSA VALLEY WATER COMPANY CALIFORNIA AMERICAN WATER COVINA IRRIGATING COMPANY CITY OF GLENDORA

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Letter 3 Responses to Comments

This letter states the concern of the San Gabriel River Water Committee in maintaining water quality for its customers.

Response to Comment 3-1

The comment notes that potential impacts associated with soil erosion and runoff into the San Gabriel River could occur from construction-related activities. The comment also mentions the risk of herbicide spilling into the San Gabriel River. The San Gabriel River Water Committee would like to ensure that their right to a clean water source is maintained through the project buildout and operation. The WCA would implement a SWPPP, that would include BMPs preventing substantial erosion or siltation to occur on the site during construction. Additionally, any herbicide used would be stored on-site according to applicable laws and regulations. The herbicide treatments would only be administered on the site by licensed applicators, including park rangers and landscape maintenance contractors. BMPs would avoid any accidental spill or release of such chemicals.

Response to Comment 3-2

This comment notes the concern of any accidental spills into the San Gabriel River from gas powered vehicles. As mentioned in the *Response to Comment 3-1* BMPs would be implemented to avoid any accidental spill or release of such chemicals from construction vehicles. During operation, vehicles would be parked in the designated parking lot, and no motorized uses would be allowed on the trails or remainder of the park property.

Response to Comments 3-3 and 3-4.

This comment notes the concern that campers may not be monitored for illegal activities that may affect the San Gabriel River. The WCA utilizes 24-hour-per-day, 7-days-per-week park ranger services to monitor, enforce, and maintain lands under WCA ownership and management. Ranger services are currently provided by the Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority. As such, rules and regulations for WCA properties, and the prescribed punishment for violation thereof, are established in the MRCA Park Ordinance. MRCA rangers are California Peace Officers and have the power of arrest. Additionally, a MRCA ranger is stationed as a resident of the River Wilderness Park to provide after-hours security.

Development of, and public access to, the Azusa Springs Area is part of Future Projects. Details of the operation and management are speculative. However, all public use would continue to be monitored by park rangers. WCA also utilizes adaptive management, and has the ability to react to nuisances, including illegal dumping and camping. As is currently the case at the River Wilderness Park, rangers actively monitor and address illegal camping and dumping. Management of public and permitted uses of Azusa Springs Area would include temporary and permanent closures among other prescription available to the WCA.

Designs for the Front Entry include a park perimeter fence and gate. Park operating hours would be from sunrise to sunset. The gate would be open during operating hours and closed after hours as part of normal park operations. Recording cameras, motion detectors, and motion activated security lighting are also currently proposed for the Front Entry area to notify park rangers of possible trespassers.

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Letter 4 – Governor's Office of Planning and Research, January, 7 2016

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit

Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Governor

Ken Alex
Director

RECEIVED
IN16-26
JAN 07 2016
WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

January 4, 2016

Rob Romanek
Watershed Conservation Authority
100 Old San Gabriel Canyon Rd.
Azusa, CA 91702

Subject: Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan
SCH#: 2015121010

Dear Rob Romanek:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Mitigated Negative Declaration to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on December 31, 2015, and no state agencies submitted comments by that date. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. **4-1**

Please call the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. If you have a question about the above-named project, please refer to the ten-digit State Clearinghouse number when contacting this office.

Sincerely,

Scott Morgan
Director, State Clearinghouse

1400 TENTH STREET P.O. BOX 3044 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95812-3044
TEL (916) 445-0613 FAX (916) 323-3018 www.opr.ca.gov

Letter 4 – Continued

Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base

SCH# **2015121010**
Project Title Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan
Lead Agency Watershed Conservation Authority

Type **MND** Mitigated Negative Declaration

Description WCA is proposing to complete the proposed objectives of the Canyon Inn Master Plan (Proposed Project) in three phases through 2028. Implementation of the Master Plan is dependent on acquiring the necessary funds to design and construct an individual or group of projects elements. Sufficient detail is known about the projects to be implemented beginning in 2017 so that these projects can be discussed in detail at the Project IS/MND level. However, details of projects that would be implemented in the later stages become speculative in terms of timing and design. These projects are discussed at the Program IS/MND level.

Lead Agency Contact

Name Rob Romanek
Agency Watershed Conservation Authority
Phone 626-815-1019 x108 ***Fax***
email
Address 100 Old San Gabriel Canyon Rd.
City Azusa ***State*** CA ***Zip*** 91702

Project Location

County Los Angeles
City Azusa
Region
Lat / Long 34° 9' 45" N / 117° 53' 38" W
Cross Streets San Gabriel Canyon Road (SR-39)
Parcel No. 8684027903, 8684027015
Township 1N ***Range*** 10W ***Section*** 14,23 ***Base*** SBBM

Proximity to:

Highways 39
Airports
Railways
Waterways San Gabriel River
Schools St. Lucy's Priory HS
Land Use Open Space

Project Issues Aesthetic/Visual; Agricultural Land; Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Biological Resources; Drainage/Absorption; Flood Plain/Flooding; Forest Land/Fire Hazard; Geologic/Seismic; Minerals; Noise; Population/Housing Balance; Public Services; Recreation/Parks; Schools/Universities; Septic System; Sewer Capacity; Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading; Solid Waste; Toxic/Hazardous; Traffic/Circulation; Vegetation; Water Quality; Water Supply; Wetland/Riparian; Landuse; Cumulative Effects; Other Issues

Reviewing Agencies Resources Agency; Department of Conservation; Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 5; Department of Parks and Recreation; Department of Water Resources; California Highway Patrol; Caltrans, District 7; Air Resources Board; State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 4; California Energy Commission; Native American Heritage Commission; Public Utilities Commission; State Lands Commission

Date Received 12/02/2015 ***Start of Review*** 12/02/2015 ***End of Review*** 12/31/2015

Letter 4 Responses to Comments

This letter is an acknowledgement that the Watershed Conservation Authority has complied with the requirements of CEQA. No response is required.

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Letter 5 – County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles, January, 9 2016

COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICTS
OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

1955 Workman Mill Road, Whittier, CA 90601-1400
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 4998, Whittier, CA 90607-4998
Telephone: (562) 699-7411, FAX: (562) 699-5422
www.lacsd.org

GRACE ROBINSON HYDE
Chief Engineer and General Manager

RECEIVED
IN16-38
JAN 09 2016
WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

January 7, 2016

Ref File No.: 3571853

Mr. Rob Romanek
Watershed Conservation Authority
100 Old San Gabriel Canyon Road
Azusa, CA 91702

Dear Mr. Romanek:

Comment letter for the Canyon Inn Supplemental to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan

The County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (Districts) received a Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the subject project on December 2, 2015. We offer the following comments regarding sewerage service:

1. The project area is outside the jurisdictional boundaries of the Districts and will require annexation into District No. 22 before sewerage service can be provided to the proposed development. For a copy of the Districts' Annexation Information and Processing Fee sheets, go to www.lacsd.org, Wastewater & Sewer Systems, Will Serve Program, and click on the appropriate link. For more specific information regarding the annexation procedure and fees, please contact Ms. Donna Curry at (562) 908-4288, extension 2708. **5-1**

2. Because of the project's location, the flow originating from the proposed project would have to be transported to the Districts' trunk sewer by local sewer(s) that are not maintained by the Districts. If no local sewer lines currently exist, it is the responsibility of the developer to convey any wastewater generated by the project to the nearest local sewer and/or Districts' trunk sewer. The nearest local sewer is located in San Gabriel Canyon Road south of Daybreak Drive. This local sewer discharge to the City of Azusa's local sewer line located in 1st Street between Alameda Avenue and Zacatecas Park for conveyance to the Districts' Dalton Section 2 Trunk Sewer, located in a right of way adjacent to Zacatecas Park. Final verification of available capacity in the local sewer and final approval to discharge flow from the subject project into the local sewer line must come from the City prior to development of the proposed project. The District's 18–inch diameter Dalton Section 2 Trunk Sewer has a design capacity of 5.5 million gallons per day (mgd) and conveyed a peak flow of 4.0 mgd when last measured in 2010. **5-2**

3. The wastewater generated by the proposed project will be treated at the San Jose Creek Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) located adjacent to the City of Industry, which has a design capacity of 100 mgd and currently processes an average flow of 69.4 mgd, or the Whittier Narrows WRP located near the City of South El Monte, which has a design capacity of 15 mgd and currently processes an average flow of 5.9 mgd. **5-3**

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Recycled Paper

Letter 5 – Continued

Mr. Rob Romanek -2- January 7, 2016

4. The expected average wastewater flow from the proposed project, described as a 2,287-square-foot café/information building and a 410-square-foot park restroom, is 784 gallons per day. For a copy of the Districts' average wastewater generation factors, go to www.lacsd.org, Wastewater & Sewer Systems, click on Will Serve Program, and click on the Table 1, Loadings for Each Class of Land Use link. **5-4**

5. The Districts are empowered by the California Health and Safety Code to charge a fee for the privilege of connecting (directly or indirectly) to the Districts' Sewerage System or for increasing the strength or quantity of wastewater discharged from connected facilities. This connection fee is a capital facilities fee that is imposed in an amount sufficient to construct an incremental expansion of the Sewerage System to accommodate the proposed project. Payment of a connection fee will be required before a permit to connect to the sewer is issued. For more information and a copy of the Connection Fee Information Sheet, go to www.lacsd.org, Wastewater & Sewer Systems, click on Will Serve Program, and search for the appropriate link. In determining the impact to the Sewerage System and applicable connection fees, the Districts' Chief Engineer will determine the user category (e.g. Condominium, Single Family home, etc.) that best represents the actual or anticipated use of the parcel or facilities on the parcel. For more specific information regarding the connection fee application procedure and fees, please contact the Connection Fee Counter at (562) 908-4288, extension 2727. **5-5**

6. In order for the Districts to conform to the requirements of the Federal Clean Air Act (CAA), the design capacities of the Districts' wastewater treatment facilities are based on the regional growth forecast adopted by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). Specific policies included in the development of the SCAG regional growth forecast are incorporated into clean air plans, which are prepared by the South Coast and Antelope Valley Air Quality Management Districts in order to improve air quality in the South Coast and Mojave Desert Air Basins as mandated by the CCA. All expansions of Districts' facilities must be sized and service phased in a manner that will be consistent with the SCAG regional growth forecast for the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, Ventura, and Imperial. The available capacity of the Districts' treatment facilities will, therefore, be limited to levels associated with the approved growth identified by SCAG. As such, this letter does not constitute a guarantee of wastewater service, but is to advise you that the Districts intend to provide this service up to the levels that are legally permitted and to inform you of the currently existing capacity and any proposed expansion of the Districts' facilities. **5-6**

If you have any questions, please contact the undersigned at (562) 908-4288, extension 2717.

Very truly yours,

Adriana Raza
Customer Service Specialist
Facilities Planning Department

AR:ar

cc: D. Curry

DOC: #3572911.D2299

Letter 5 Responses to Comments

This letter acknowledges the receipt of a Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan.

Response to Comment 5-1

This comment states that the project area would be located outside of the jurisdictional boundaries of the County Sanitation Districts and would require annexation into District No. 22 before sewerage service can be provided for the project. The WCA as the Lead Agency will file all appropriate forms and pay any required fees required for the annexation of the proposed project into District No. 22.

Response to Comment 5-2

This comment states that a local sewer line not maintained by the County will be required to convey flow to the County's trunk sewer. The WCA will obtain all necessary permits and approvals from the City of Azusa for a the new sewer line and expansion of the trunk sewer capacity for the Proposed Project.

Response to Comment 5-3

This comment states that wastewater generated by the Proposed Project will be treated at the San Jose Creek Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) or the Whittier Narrows WRP. Current design capacity of the San Jose Creek WRP and the Whittier Narrows WRP would not be exceeded by the Proposed Project.

Response to Comment 5-4

This comment provides information regarding wastewater flow from the Proposed Project. The expected average wastewater flow from the Proposed Project, described as a 2,287-square-foot café/information building and a 410-square-foot park restroom is 784 gallons per day. This amount of wastewater would not exceed the design capacities of the San Jose Creek (WRP) and the Whittier Narrows WRP (as described above).

Response to Comment 5-5

This comment states that the County will charge a connection fee before a permit to connect to the sewer is issued. The WCA will pay all fees associated with sewer connection.

Response to Comment 5-6

The WCA acknowledges that the aforementioned comment letter does not guarantee wastewater service for the Proposed Project. The WCA also notes that the District intends to provide service up to the levels legally permitted .

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Letter 6 – California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), January, 15 2016

State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
South Coast Region
3883 Ruffin Road
San Diego, CA 92123
(858) 467-4201
www.wildlife.ca.gov

EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director

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IN16 - 60
JAN 15 2016
WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

January 15, 2016

Mr. Rob Romanek
Watershed Conservation Authority
100 Old San Gabriel Canyon Road
Azusa, CA 91702
rromanek@wca.ca.gov

Subject: Comments on the Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration and Initial Study for the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan Project, City of Azusa, Los Angeles County (SCH # 2015121010).

Dear Mr. Romanek:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) has reviewed the above-referenced Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and Initial Study (IS). The Project is located along Old San Gabriel Canyon Road in the northern portion of the City of Azusa, Los Angeles County, and situated along the San Gabriel River (River) approximately 1.8 km southwest of Morris Reservoir.

The Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) is the lead agency for the MND under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). WCA is proposing to complete the proposed objectives of the Canyon Inn Master Plan in three phases through 2028 as funding becomes available. The MND analysis project-level impacts for part of Phase I, and all of the projects from Phases II and III include: roundabout on State Route 39 (SR-39), extending the bike trail from its northern terminus along SR-39 across SR-39 and into the park, installing water and sewer lines within the ROW of SR-39 to the park, undergrounding existing utility lines along SR-39, and constructing an entry gateway, café, restrooms, pavilion, loop nature trail, bicycle rest stop, river overlooks, picnic facility and play area, drainage improvements vegetated swales and parking.

Impacts analyzed at the Program Level from Phase I include: bike path SR-39 underpass in the River, western bank nature trail and improvements, point bar nature trail and improvements, the triangle, and Azusa Springs (including tent camping). These projects would require subsequent CEQA review at the time they are scheduled for development.

The Department met with WCA in 2013 to discuss and provide pre-CEQA feedback for the original proposed Project. During this meeting the Department recommended adding a roundabout or signal crossing on SR-39 to eliminate the SR-39 undercrossing in the River.

Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870

Letter 6 – Continued

Mr. Rob Romanek
Watershed Conservation Authority
January 15, 2016
Page 2 of 6

The following comments and recommendations have been prepared pursuant to the Department's authority as a Responsible Agency under CEQA Guidelines section 15381 over those aspects of the proposed project that come under the purview of the California Endangered Species Act (Fish and Game Code § 2050 *et seq.*) and Fish and Game Code section 1600 *et seq.*, and pursuant to our authority as Trustee Agency with jurisdiction over natural resources affected by the project (California Environmental Quality Act, [CEQA] Guidelines § 15386) to assist the Lead Agency in avoiding or minimizing potential project impacts on biological resources.

1) Tiered Environmental Review. The MND includes a Programmatic review of project components for Phase 1 as funding becomes available. The Department is unclear how WCA intends to rely on an MND for tiering subsequent CEQA review for future related projects. The tiering provisions in the Public Resources Code and CEQA Guidelines speak exclusively in terms of an environmental impact (EIR) report as the only appropriate first-tier environmental document. (Pub. Resources Code, §§21068.5, 21093, 21094; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15152.). The Department recommends using an EIR to develop an appropriate document to tier future Phase I projects off of when funding becomes available. **6-1**

2) Future Project Impacts. The Department is concerned future projects will introduce and encourage recreational use of the north bank of the River as well as in areas north of SR-39, parts of which are currently inaccessible to humans. This section of the River is designated Critical Habitat by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), as well as several listed and special status species including least Bell's vireo (Vireo bellii *pusillus*), southwestern pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*), arroyo toad (Bufo californicus), two-striped garter snake (Thamnophis hammondii), arroyo chub (*Gila orcutt*), speckled dace (*Rhinichthys osculus*), coast range newt (Taricha torosa *torosa*), several species of bats, and coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum*).

   The Azusa Springs area, which is a unique feature that includes a spring-fed pond, appears to have not been surveyed for biological resources. The Department is concerned that introducing tent camping and hiking will result in an additional significant negative impact to this habitat. The Department recommends WCA limit trails and camping areas to the proposed Watershed Park area east of SR-39 and south of the River and place a priority on limiting disturbance and conservation of biological resources for the remaining areas. **6-2**

   The Project includes the extension of the bike trail under the SR-39 Bridge. In 2013, the Department recommended alternatives, including a roundabout, to eliminate the need for this in-stream bike undercrossing. While the Department is pleased with the incorporation of the roundabout in the new design, the Department continues to recommend eliminating the bike trail extension under the SR-39 Bridge.

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3) Streambed Impacts. The MND identifies impacts to 3.25 acres of Department jurisdictional streams through implementation of Project activities. During a meeting with WCA staff in December 2015, WCA estimated the actual acreage of impact to jurisdictional drainages at around 0.03 acres. Additionally, the MND indicates black cottonwood forest, and other vegetation communities that are not present on the Project site. WCA sent the Department corrected maps on January 11, 2016. The Department recommends the MND be updated with the correct impact acreage and vegetation maps to allow the Department to assess impacts and analyze appropriate mitigation. **6-3**

4) Deferred Mitigation. The MND addressed the potential for the above mentioned sensitive species, including, but not limited to, arroyo chub, speckled dace, southwestern pond turtle, least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, to be found within the Project footprint however, focused or protocol surveys were not included in the analysis of the MND. Instead, the MND requires limited preconstruction surveys and relocation as mitigation measures to bring impacts below the significance threshold. Because species specific surveys were not conducted and the magnitude of impacts to each species could not be quantified, analyzed, and disclose in the MND. Absent this information the Department is not able to determine if impacts to the species are mitigated to below a level of significance through the implementation of the measures, as determined in the MND. In addition, it is also not possible to determine if alternative Project design would avoid or lessen these impacts. **6-4**

   a) CEQA Guidelines §15070 and §15071 require the document to analyze if the Project may have a significant effect on the environment as well as review if the Project will"avoid the effect or mitigate to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur". Relying on future surveys, the preparation of future management plans, or mitigating by obtaining permits from the Department are considered deferred mitigation under CEQA. In order to analyze if a project may have a significant effect on the environment, the Project-related impacts, including survey results for species that occur in the Project footprint, need to be disclosed during the public comment period. This information is necessary to allow the Department to comment on alternatives to avoid impacts, as well as to assess the significance of the specific impact relative to the species (e.g., current range, distribution, population trends, and connectivity).

5) Project Level Biological Surveys. The MND did not include Project-specific surveys for listed and rare plants and animals. The Department requests a complete assessment of the flora and fauna within and adjacent to the Project area, with particular emphasis upon identifying endangered, threatened, sensitive, and locally unique species and sensitive habitats. To enable the Department to adequately review and comment on the proposed Project from the standpoint of the protection of plants, fish, and wildlife, we recommend the following information be included or addressed in the MND: **6-5**

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a) Per CEQA Guidelines, section 15063(d), information on the regional setting that is critical to an assessment of environmental impacts, with special emphasis on resources that are rare or unique to the region. **6-5(a)**

b) A thorough, recent, floristic-based assessment of special status plants and natural communities, following the Department's Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities[1]. The Department recommends focused, repeated surveys be conducted by a qualified botanist during the appropriate floristic period(s) with results disclosed in the environmental document. Surveys should be no more than two years old and surveys periods should be verified with a known reference site. The Department recommends that floristic, alliance- and/or association-based mapping and vegetation impact assessments be conducted at the Project site and neighboring vicinity. The *Manual of California Vegetation*, second edition, should also be used to inform this mapping and assessment (Sawyer et al. 2008; https://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/vegcamp/veg_manual.asp). Adjoining habitat areas should be included in this assessment where site activities could lead to direct or indirect impacts off-site. Habitat mapping at the alliance level will help establish baseline vegetation conditions. **6-5(b)**

c) A current inventory of the biological resources associated with each habitat type on site and within the area of potential effect. The Department's California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) in Sacramento should be contacted at www.wildlife.ca.gov/biogeodata/ to obtain current information on any previously reported sensitive species and habitat, including Significant Natural Areas identified under Chapter 12 of the Fish and Game Code. The CNDDB should be used to generate an initial list of potential species occurrence and not as evidence of non-occurrence. A lack of records in CNDDB does not mean that rare plants or animals do not occur in a Project area. Field verification for the presence or absence of sensitive species, by a qualified biologist, is necessary to provide a complete biological assessment for adequate CEQA review. **6-5(c)**

d) An inventory of rare, threatened, endangered, and other sensitive species on site and within the area of potential effect. Species to be addressed should include all those which meet the CEQA definition (CEQA Guidelines, §15380). This should include sensitive fish, wildlife, reptile, amphibian species, and any species that can be shown to meet the criteria for State listing, which includes State Species of Special Concern (SSC) and California **6-5(d)**

[1] http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/cnddb/pdfs/protocols_for_surveying_and_evaluating_impacts.pdf

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Native Plant Society (CNPS) Lists 1A, 1B, and 2 (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15380(d), 15065(a)). Seasonal variations in habitat use of the Project area should also be addressed. Focused species-specific surveys, conducted at the appropriate time of year and time of day when the sensitive species are active or otherwise identifiable, are required. Acceptable species-specific survey procedures should be developed in consultation with the Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. **6-5(d)**

6) California Endangered Species Act (CESA). Department CNDDB records indicate over 15 other Rare, Threatened and Endangered species not identified in the MND appear to have high potential to occur on the Project site.

The Department considers adverse impacts to a species protected by CESA, for the purposes of CEQA, to be significant without mitigation. As to CESA, take of any endangered, threatened, candidate species, or state-listed rare plant species that results from the Project is prohibited, except as authorized by state law (Fish and Game Code, §§ 2080, 2085; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §786.9). Consequently, if the Project, Project construction, or any Project-related activity during the life of the Project will result in take of a species designated as endangered or threatened, or a candidate for listing under CESA, the Department recommends that the Project proponent seek appropriate take authorization under CESA prior to implementing the Project. Appropriate authorization from the Department may include an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) or a consistency determination in certain circumstances, among other options (Fish and Game Code §§ 2080.1, 2081, subds. (b),(c)). Early consultation is encouraged, as significant modification to a Project and mitigation measures may be required in order to obtain a CESA Permit. Revisions to the Fish and Game Code, effective January 1998, may require that the Department issue a separate CEQA document for the issuance of an ITP unless the Project CEQA document addresses all Project impacts to CESA-listed species and specifies a mitigation monitoring and reporting program that will meet the requirements of an ITP. For these reasons, biological mitigation monitoring and reporting proposals should be of sufficient detail and resolution to satisfy the requirements for a CESA ITP. **6-6**

If any sensitive plants, animals, or habitats are found on site, CEQA Guidelines, section 15071(e) state the MND should include mitigation measures for project-related impacts to avoid potentially significant effects. Mitigation measures should emphasize avoidance and reduction of Project impacts. For unavoidable impacts, on-site habitat restoration or enhancement should be discussed in detail. If on-site mitigation is not feasible or would not be biologically viable and therefore not adequately mitigate the loss of biological functions and values, off-site mitigation through habitat creation and/or acquisition and preservation in perpetuity should be addressed. The Department does not support translocation of plants or animals as a primary mitigation strategy. Any proposed mitigation should have suitable protection, success criteria, and a non-wasting funding mechanism to provide for

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long-term management. **6-6(cont.)**

7) Fuel Modification Impacts. The MND did not include information as to how the Project or adjacent conserved land may be affected by any fuel modification requirements. A discussion of any fuel modification requirements for this Project should be included in the MND to allow the Department to assess potential impacts to biological resources. The Department recommends all fuel modification requirements be met on the Project site, and not in conserved adjacent habitat. Habitat being subjected to fuel modification (e.g., thinning, trimming, removal of mulch layer) should be considered an impact to these vegetation communities and mitigated accordingly. It is recommended fuel modification activities not take place on lands set aside as mitigation for other Project-related impacts. The Department also recommends any irrigation proposed in fuel modification zones drain back into the development and not onto conserved habitat land as perennial sources of water allow for the introduction of invasive Argentine ants (*Linepithema humile*). **6-7**

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the referenced MND. Questions regarding this letter and further coordination on these issues should be directed to Kelly Schmoker at (949-581-1015), and kelly.schmoker@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

for
Betty J. Courtney
Environmental Program Manager I

ec:
Scott Morgan (State Clearinghouse)
Scott Harris, CDFW, Pasadena
Victoria Chau, CDFW, Los Alamitos

Letter 6 Responses to Comments

This letter states concerns of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife with respect to plant and wildlife species present or potentially present within and adjacent to the Project area.

Response to Comment 6-1

The comment notes a lack of clarity concerning the scope of the MND for future related projects that are analyzed at the programmatic level.

The IS/MND for the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Master Plan is a combined Project and Program IS/MND. A Project IS/MND examines the environmental effects of a specific development project, while a Program IS/MND is prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related either geographically, as logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions, in connection with issuance of rules, regulations, plans or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program. The Entry Improvements Projects, as part of the Master Plan, are analyzed at the project level. Future Projects do not have a capital funding strategy at this time and implementation timing and design are speculative. Therefore, the Future Projects were analyzed at a program level. Once more project detail is known and the projects receive funding and further design, they will undergo the appropriate level CEQA review. The MND only analyzed the Entry Improvements Project at the Project level.

Response to Comment 6-2

This comment notes Department concerns over increased recreational use on the north bank of the San Gabriel River (river), within the Azusa Springs area, and the river itself. Several species are listed within the comment, many of which are federally-listed species. Impacts to these species are discussed in Section 4.4.2 of the Draft Programmatic IS/MND.

The WCA utilizes 24-hour-per-day, 7-days-per-week park ranger services to monitor, enforce, and maintain lands under WCA ownership and management. Ranger services are currently provided by the Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority (MRCA). As such, rules and regulations for WCA properties, and the prescribed punishment for violation thereof, are established in the MRCA Park Ordinance. MRCA rangers are California Peace Officers and have the power of arrest. Additionally, a MRCA ranger is stationed as a resident of the River Wilderness Park to provide afterhours security.

Development of, and public access to, the Azusa Springs Area is part the of Future Projects as described in the IS/MND. Details of the operation and management are speculative. However, all public use would be monitored by park rangers. WCA also utilizes adaptive management, and has the ability to react to nuisances, including illegal dumping and camping and access into restricted areas such as the river itself. As is currently the case at the River Wilderness Park, rangers actively monitor and address these concerns. Management of public and permitted uses of Azusa Springs Area would include temporary and permanent closures among other prescription available to the WCA.

Designs for the Entry Improvements Project include a park perimeter fence and gate. Park operating hours would be from sunrise to sunset. The gate would be open during operating hours and closed after hours as part of normal park operations. Recording cameras, motion detectors, and motion activated security lighting are also currently proposed for the front entry area to notify park rangers of possible trespassers.

The Entry Improvements Project includes construction of the roundabout and bicycle trail per the Canyon Inn Master Plan. The Bike Path Underpass remains part of the Master Plan and its implementation and feasibility will be evaluated at a future date as determined by the WCA.

Response to Comment 6-3

This comment notes that vegetation communities need to be updated to correspond with Department-preferred standards. Vegetation communities were revisited and updated in the biology section of the draft IS/MND. Changes made to the text are provided in Section 4 of this Final IS/MND. Additionally, updated maps with actual acreage of impacts to jurisdictional drainages and vegetation communities were provided to WCA and the Department. These maps are included as an attachment to this document.

Response to Comment 6-4

This comment notes the potential for presence of several sensitive species, such as several aquatic species and riparian bird species, within the Project footprint. The Draft IS/MND notes the potential for presence of these species in the areas adjacent to the Entry Improvements Project footprint, rather than for areas being directly affected by the Entry Improvements Project. As stated in the Draft IS/MND, although direct impacts to riparian habitat and Critical Habitat are avoided, indirect impacts to either the southwestern willow flycatcher or least Bell's vireo still may occur from construction noise and dust. Mitigation Measure B-2 would mitigate impacts to a less than significant level through avoidance.

Habitat for the aquatic species, such as the arroyo chub, speckled dace, southwestern pond turtle, two-striped garter snake, arroyo toad, and coast range newt, is not anticipated to be directly affected by the Entry Improvements Project. These species all require permanent water for breeding habitat, and this type of habitat is not affected directly by the Entry Improvements Project. Nevertheless, the MND acknowledges the potential for upland habitat removal for the species that also use non-aquatic habitats. The majority of the Entry Improvements Project Area is considered to be disturbed habitat with limited potential for most sensitive species, except on a transitory basis. However, because some sensitive species may use non-habitat areas on a temporary basis, potential for them to occur on site was assessed due to the proximity of their habitats to the Project.

Nevertheless, due to the potential for sensitive species, a Section 7 consultation is anticipated for the federal listed species that may temporarily use the project area.

Response to Comment 6-5

As the comment states, no focused surveys were conducted for the listed and rare plant and animals species. The primary reason for not conducting species specific focused surveys was that habitat for these species would not be directly impacted by the Entry Improvements Projects. General biological surveys along with a jurisdictional delineation were conducted for the Entry Improvements Projects. Site specific biological surveys, including focused surveys if warranted, for the Future Projects will be conducted during the environmental documentation process for each of the Future Project elements.

a. This comment addresses the adequacy of the CEQA analysis per CEQA guidelines. The Draft IS/MND addresses potentially occurring species, in accordance with CEQA, by conducting a habitat-based analysis. Because no direct impacts to listed resources were anticipated for

the Entry Improvements Projects, no focused surveys were conducted as part of the analysis process.

b. This comment recommends floristic surveys. Floristic surveys were not recommended based on analysis of the habitats that were present within the Entry Improvements Project limits. The majority of the area had been previously disturbed and potential was considered to be very low for rare plants. In 2008, a Biological Reconnaissance Survey and Constraints Analysis Report (Biological Constrains Report) was prepared for the El Encanto River Wilderness Park Master Plan by Bonterra Consulting (Bonterra 2008). Findings of that Report are pertinent to the Entry Improvements Project and Future Projects areas: Western Bank, Point Bar, Azusa Springs, and Triangle.

   Special status plants and natural communities for the Future Projects elements of the Canyon Inn Master Plan will be evaluated as those projects are designed and move forward toward development.

c. This comment states that a lack of records in the CNDDB does not mean that rare plants or animals do not occur within a Project area, and recommends a field verification. We concur with this and, although CNDDB records were consulted, our analysis was based on a field survey of habitats present within the Project area rather than solely on CNDDB records.

d. This comment recommends surveys for rare, threatened, endangered and other sensitive species for the Project area. As stated previously, our analysis was based on habitats present within the Entry Improvements Project area, none of which are considered likely to support sensitive species except on a limited and temporal basis for some species. The IS/MND does address the indirect impacts for sensitive species and provides mitigation for avoiding these impacts through pre-construction surveys if construction occurs during the nesting bird season and several options of avoidance if nests are discovered.

   Rare, threatened, endangered and other sensitive species and natural communities for the Future Projects elements of the Canyon Inn Master Plan will be evaluated as those projects are designed and move forward toward development.

Response to Comment 6-6

This comment states that there were 15 species within the CNDDB database records that were not identified in the MND but that have a high potential to occur within the Project area, and recommends Section 2081 take authorization for their potential presence.

The following discussion can be found in Section 4.4.1 Environmental Setting of the Initial Study. The literature search documented 41 special-status plant species, four of which are federally and/or state listed, in the Entry Improvements Project area vicinity. These four include Braunton's milk-vetch (*Astragalus brauntonii*), Nevin's barberry (*Berberis nevinii*), thread-leaved brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*), and slender-horned spineflower (*Dodecahema leptoceras*). No records of these special-status plants have been found on the Entry Improvements Projects area. No special-status plant species were observed during the biological reconnaissance survey.

The literature search documented 31 special-status wildlife species (seven of which are federally and/or state-listed species) in the vicinity of project area. Thirteen of these wildlife species were determined to have a low to high potential to occur within the Entry Improvements Project area. The remaining 18 species were presumed absent from the Entry Improvements Project area. One

listed wildlife species was identified in the CNDDB with a high potential to occur in the Entry Improvements Project area, least Bell's vireo. As stated in the comment, impacts to this species was determined to require mitigation, and the mitigation recommends avoidance. All other listed species had a moderate, low, or presumed absent potential to occur within the Entry Improvements Project area. None of the special-status wildlife species with a potential to occur in the area were observed during the reconnaissance survey. Please refer to section 4.4.2 (a) of the Initial Study.

For Future Projects, the level of impact will depend on the exact location and design of each project. As these projects could take many years to fund site conditions could change. The Draft Programmatic IS/MND deals with this uncertainty by requiring future surveys, including focused surveys as needed, to determine the exact nature and level of impact to sensitive biological resources.

Response to Comment 6-7

This comment states the concern and offers recommendations as to how the Entry Improvements Project or adjacent conserved land may be affected by any fuel modification requirements. This recommendation is noted. Fuel modification in adjacent conserved land is not proposed.

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SECTION 4. REVISIONS TO THE DRAFT PROGRAMMATIC INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

4.1 Changes to the Draft Programmatic IS/MND

As a result of minor administrative changes to the Proposed Project, revisions have been made to the Draft Programmatic IS/MND text. These revisions include minor changes to the Project Description and do not constitute substantial revisions that would require recirculation of the document. According to Section 15073.5 of the CEQA Guidelines, "a substantial revision shall mean:

(1) A new, avoidable significant effect is identified and mitigation measures or project revisions must be added in order to reduce the effect to insignificance, or

(2) The lead agency determines that the proposed mitigation measures or project revisions will not reduce potential effects to less than significance and new measures or revisions must be required."

The revisions are provided below. Changes in text are identified by ~~strikeout~~ where text is removed and by <u>underline</u> where text is added.

1. Change to Vegetation Communities – 4.4 Biological Resources. This change was made to clarify vegetation community labels within the Entry Improvements Project area.

Page 4-13 of the Draft IS/MND:

Vegetation Communities

The Entry Improvements Projects area is currently composed of disturbed or developed areas. There are four vegetation communities present in and around the Entry Improvements Project area, including ~~1) Riversidean alluvial fan sage scrub, 2) coastal sage scrub, 3) California annual grassland – disturbed, and 4) black cottonwood riparian woodland.~~ <u>1) Southern Willow Scrub 2) California Sagebrush Scrub, 3) Southern Mixed Chaparral, and 4) Ruderal/Disturbed/Ornamental.</u> Plant species observed within these consist mainly of native scrub and chaparral species, as well as nonnative weedy herbaceous species and ornamental trees. ~~Two vegetation communities located on the northern portion of the Entry Improvements Project area, including the black cottonwood forest and Riversidean alluvial fan sage scrub, contain special-status resources. The black cottonwood forest contains black cottonwoods, coast live oaks, and various willow trees, which are protected under the City of Azusa's Tree Preservation Ordinance. The Riversidean alluvial fan sage scrub is considered a special-status vegetation community by CDFW and CNPS (ECORP 2014a).~~

The Future Projects consisting of the Western Bank, Point Bar, Azusa Springs, and Triangle are mostly composed of five vegetation communities that include 1) California Sagebrush Scrub, 2) Scalebroom Scrub, 3) Ornamental Disturbed, 4) California Annual Grassland, and 5) Southern Mixed Chaparral (Bonterra 2008). Surveys that will identify current vegetation communities are anticipated during project design of the future phases of the Proposed Project.

2. Added text to the Amphibian and Reptiles discussion under Entry Improvements Projects in Section 4.4.2 Biological Resources Environmental Checklist and Discussion Question a). This addition was made to clarify the decision to not complete focused or protocol surveys for sensitive species for the Entry Improvements Projects.

Page 4-16 of the Draft IS/MND:

Amphibians and Reptiles. Special-status amphibians and reptiles, including the coast horned lizard, coast range newt, and two-striped garter snake, may utilize several of the habitats present on the Entry Improvements Projects site, including coastal sage scrub, black cottonwood forest, and Riversidean alluvial fan scrub. Habitat for the aquatic species, such as the arroyo chub, speckled dace, southwestern pond turtle, two-striped garter snake, arroyo toad, and coast range newt, is not anticipated to be directly affected by the Entry Improvements Project. These species all require permanent water for breeding habitat, and this type of habitat would not be affected directly by the Entry Improvements Project. However, there is also a possibility these species may be present, on a transitory basis, in the disturbed annual grassland and disturbed/developed areas. Project implementation could potentially disrupt or destroy the habitats that these species may occupy, as well as microhabitats within them, such as burrows. Abundant habitat remains within areas adjacent to the project site. The Entry Improvements Projects are expected to entail a temporal loss of habitat for localized populations. The removal of habitat for these species would be minimized to the extent possible. It is unlikely that the loss of habitat for these species related to the Entry Improvements Projects would lead to listing; impacts would be less than significant.

3. Expanded discussion Future Projects in Section 4.4.2 Biological Resources Environmental Checklist and Discussion Question a). This addition was made to explained the potential impacts from increase human presence on the north bank of the San Gabriel River.

Page 4-17 of the Draft IS/MND:

Least Bell's Vireo and Southwestern Willow Flycatcher. Critical Habitat for Southwestern willow flycatcher is located along the San Gabriel and adjacent to the Point Bar, Azusa Springs, and the Triangle. This area provides essential habitat for riparian favoring species in the northern Los Angeles Basin (Bonterra 2008). It is likely that direct impacts to riparian habitat and Critical Habitat would be avoided during the construction of the Future Projects, although the exact location and effects of each project would be determined with a project-specific biology study after project details are known. However, indirect impacts could still occur if construction timing occurs during the breeding season for these species, which runs from April through August. Incorporation of Mitigation Measure B-2 would be implemented to mitigate these impacts to a less than significant level. Indirect impacts can also occur from the increases recreational use of the north bank of the San Gabriel River. Increased human presence can result in nuisances, including noise, illegal dumping and camping, and access to restricted areas. All public use would be monitored by park rangers. WCA also utilizes adaptive management, and has the ability to react to nuisances. Impacts from the increased presence of humans on the north bank of the San Gabriel River are anticipated to be less than significant.

4. Added discussion about Amphibians and Reptiles to Future Projects discussion in Section 4.4.2 Biological Resources Environmental Checklist and Discussion Question a). This addition was made to clarify how determining impacts to sensitive species at the time this CEQA document was prepared was not viable due to the speculative timing and design of the Future Projects.

Page 4-17 of the Draft IS/MND:

Amphibians and Reptiles. Special-status amphibians and reptiles, including the coast horned lizard, coast range newt, and two-striped garter snake, may utilize several of the habitats present on the Future Projects site. The exact location and components of Future Projects is currently unknown and remain speculative in terms of timing and design; therefore, it would impractical to assess project impacts without understanding the scope of Future Projects. When greater detail is known for the Future Projects, project specific biological studies, including focused or protocol surveys for special-status species, if needed, will be conducted to determine the effects of each project.

4.2 Decision Not to Recirculate Draft MND

After the completion of the public/agency comment period for the Draft Programmatic IS/MND, minor changes were made to the Project Description and other sections of the Programmatic IS/MND. These revisions do not meet the criteria for recirculation of the MND prior to adoption, outlined in Section 15073.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines. According to the Guidelines "A lead agency is required to recirculate a negative declaration when the document must be substantially revised after public notice of its availability has been given pursuant to Section 15072 but prior to its adoption."

The revisions proposed in this Final Programmatic IS/MND do not meet the criteria for recirculation provided in Section 15073.5 (c) of the CEQA Guidelines.

SECTION 5. MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PLAN

5.1 Introduction

In accordance with CEQA, a Programmatic IS/MND that identified adverse impacts related to the construction activity for the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan was prepared. The MND identified mitigation measures that would reduce or eliminate these impacts.

Section 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code and Sections 15091(d) and 15097 of the State CEQA Guidelines require public agencies to adopt a reporting and monitoring plan (MMRP) for changes to the project which it has adopted or made a condition of project approval in order to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment. A MMRP is required for the Proposed Project, because the IS/MND identified potentially significant adverse impacts related to construction activity, and mitigation measures have been identified to mitigate these impacts. Adoption of the MMRP will occur along with approval of the Proposed Project.

5.2 Purpose of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan

This MMRP has been prepared to ensure that all required mitigation measures are implemented and completed according to schedule and maintained in a satisfactory manner during the construction and operation of the Proposed Project, as required. The MMRP may be modified by the WCA during project implementation, as necessary, in response to changing conditions or other project refinements. Table 5-1 has been prepared to assist the responsible parties in implementing the MMRP. This table identifies the category of significant environmental impact(s), individual mitigation measures, monitoring and mitigation timing, responsible person/agency for implementing the measure, monitoring and reporting procedure, and notation space to confirm implementation of the mitigation measures. The numbering of the mitigation measures follows the numbering sequence in the Programmatic IS/MND.

5.3 Roles and Responsibilities

The WCA, as Lead Agency, is responsible for oversight of compliance of the mitigation measures in the MMRP.

5.4 Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan

The column categories identified in the MMRP table (Table 5-1) are described below.

- **Mitigation Measure** – This column lists the mitigation measures by number.
- **Monitoring Activity/Timing/Frequency/Schedule** – This column lists the activity to be monitored for each mitigation measure, the timing of each activity, and the frequency/schedule of monitoring for each activity.
- **Implementation Responsibility/Verification** – This column identifies the entity responsible for complying with the requirements of the mitigation measure, and provides space for verification initials and date.
- **Responsibility for Oversight of Compliance/Verification** – This column provides the agency responsible for oversight of the mitigation implementation, and is to be dated and initialed by the agency representative based on the documentation provided by the construction contractor or through personal verification by agency staff.

- **Outside Agency Coordination** – this column lists any agencies with which the WCA may coordinate for implementation of the mitigation measure.
- **Comments** – this column provides space for written comments, if necessary.

Table 5-1
Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan
Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan

Mitigation Measure	Monitoring Activity/Timing / Frequency/ Schedule	Implementation Responsibility/ Verification	Responsibility for Oversight of Compliance/ Verification	Outside Agency Coordination	Comments
AQ-1: During construction activity, all construction equipment (≥ 150 horsepower) shall be California Air Resources Board (CARB) Tier 3 certified or better. Additionally, during grading activity, total horsepower-hours per day for all equipment shall not exceed 14,864 horsepower-hours per day and the maximum disturbance (actively graded area) shall not exceed 4 acres per day.	**Activity:** Comply with CARB Tier 3 certification or better. Limit equipment used for grading activity to 14,864 horsepower-hours per day and not to exceed 4 acres per day. **Timing:** During construction. **Frequency:** As necessary during construction.	**Construction Contractor** Initials Date	**Watershed Conservation Authority** Initials Date	None required.	
B-1: To ensure compliance with Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and Section 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code, and to avoid any potential impacts to special-status bird species that may occur in the project vicinity, construction activities shall be conducted outside the bird nesting bird season (March 15 to September 15) to avoid any potential disturbance of avian breeding activities. If vegetation removal, clearing, and/or grading for the Proposed Project (i.e. impacting ornamental	**Activity:** Conduct a pre-construction nesting bird survey. If active nests are found establish a 200-foot radius buffer around the nest. For work occurring within the buffer, conduct	**Project Biologist** Initials Date	**Watershed Conservation Authority** Initials Date	Possible coordination with CDFW.	

Mitigation Measure	Monitoring Activity/Timing / Frequency/ Schedule	Implementation Responsibility/ Verification	Responsibility for Oversight of Compliance/ Verification	Outside Agency Coordination	Comments
	biological				
vegetation) is conducted during the bird nesting season (March 15 to September 15), then construction will be limited in the vicinity of any active nests per the recommendations of a qualified biologist. Three days prior to the onset of construction activities, a qualified biologist shall survey disturbance for the presence of any active bird nests within the limits of the project. If no active nests are found, no further mitigation would be required. However, any active nest found during survey efforts shall be mapped on the construction plans, and an appropriate buffer area (typically 200 feet in every direction) shall be established around any active nest. Encroachment into the buffer area shall only be allowed if the proposed activity shall not disturb the nest occupants. Construction within the buffer area may resume after a qualified biologist has determined that fledglings have left the nest.	monitoring to avoid active nests. **Timing:** Three days prior to construction and during construction. **Frequency:** Once during pre-construction and as necessary during construction.				
B-2: If construction will occur between April and August, then protocol surveys for least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher shall take place prior to project commencement. Protocol surveys for the least Bell's vireo entail eight surveys, spaced 10 days apart, from April 10 through July 31. Protocol surveys for the southwestern willow flycatcher entail five surveys, with one survey from May 15 through May 31, two surveys from June 1 through June	**Activity:** Conduct protocol surveys for least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher. **Timing:** Prior to and during construction	**Project Biologist** _____ Initials _____ Date	**Watershed Conservation Authority** _____ Initials _____ Date	Possible Coordination with CDFW.	

Mitigation Measure	Monitoring Activity/Timing / Frequency/ Schedule	Implementation Responsibility/ Verification	Responsibility for Oversight of Compliance/ Verification	Outside Agency Coordination	Comments
24, and two surveys from June 24 through July 17. For initiation of any regulatory permitting	(if necessary).				
process for either of these species, protocol surveys would be necessary. Mitigation for impacts (direct or indirect) will be determined during the permitting process with the regulatory agencies. If potential (direct or indirect) impacts to southwestern willow flycatcher and least Bell's vireo are identified during construction of the project, Section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will determine appropriate mitigation. Mitigation measures may include avoidance of impacts during the breeding season (seasonal work restrictions), implementation of construction noise and dust minimization measures, or biological monitoring.	**Frequency:** As required.				
B-3: Prior to the construction of any phase or component of the project that involves impacting drainages, or wetlands through filling, stockpiling, conversion to a storm drain, channelization, bank stabilization, road or utility line crossings, or any other modification to a jurisdictional drainage, a jurisdictional delineation shall be conducted. Any jurisdictional impacts would require permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and Los Angeles Region Regional Water Quality	**Activity:** Jurisdictional delineation of impacts to drainages. Permits from the USACE, CDFW, and RWQCB. **Timing:** Prior to construction.	**Project Biologist** _____ Initials _____ Date	**Watershed Conservation Authority** _____ Initials _____ Date	Coordination with USACE, CDFW, and RWQCB.	

Mitigation Measure	Monitoring Activity/Timing / Frequency/ Schedule	Implementation Responsibility/ Verification	Responsibility for Oversight of Compliance/ Verification	Outside Agency Coordination	Comments
Control Board (RWQCB) before any development could commence. Project specific mitigation for impacts to features jurisdictional	**Frequency:** As required.				
to state and federal agencies will be determined during the wetland permitting process. Mitigation could include land conservation and management in perpetuity, on-site habitat enhancement and restoration, payment of in-lieu fees to authorized conservation organizations, or a combination of these measures.					
CR-1: If archaeological resources are encountered during grading, construction activities in the area of the find shall be immediately suspended and the resource left in place until a qualified archaeologist can examine it and determine appropriate mitigation measures in accordance with the provisions of CEQA Section 15064.5. The archaeologist shall complete any requirements for the mitigation of adverse effects on any resources determined to be significant and implement appropriate treatment measures.	**Activity:** If archaeological materials are found then ground disturbance activities must be suspended within the vicinity of the find. Contact a qualified archaeologist. **Timing:** During construction. **Frequency:** As required.	**Project Archaeologist** _____ Initials _____ Date	**Watershed Conservation Authority** _____ Initials _____ Date	None required.	

Mitigation Measure	Monitoring Activity/Timing / Frequency/ Schedule	Implementation Responsibility/ Verification	Responsibility for Oversight of Compliance/ Verification	Outside Agency Coordination	Comments
CR-2: If paleontological resources are encountered during grading, construction activities in the area of the find shall be immediately suspended, the resource must be left in place until a qualified paleontologist can examine it and determine appropriate mitigation measures.	**Activity:** If paleontological materials are found then ground disturbance activities must be suspended within the vicinity of the find. Contact a qualified paleontologist. **Timing:** During construction in undisturbed soil. **Frequency:** As required.	**Project Paleontologist** Initials Date	**Watershed Conservation Authority** Initials Date	None required.	
CR-3: If human remains are encountered during grading, construction activities in the area of the find must be immediately halted and the Los Angeles County coroner must be notified within 24 hours of the discovery (California Health and Safety Code §7050.5). If the coroner determines that the remains are not recent, the coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for consultation	**Activity:** If human remains are discovered, construction activities in the area of the find will be halted. Notify the Los Angeles County Coroner and	**Construction Contractor** Initials	**Watershed Conservation Authority** Initials	Los Angeles County Coroner, Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), and Most Likely Descendent (MLD).	

Mitigation Measure	Monitoring Activity/Timing / Frequency/ Schedule	Implementation Responsibility/ Verification	Responsibility for Oversight of Compliance/ Verification	Outside Agency Coordination	Comments
(Public Resources Code §5097.98). The NAHC will designate a Most Likely Descendant who will make recommendations concerning reassignment of the remains in consultation with the lead agency and Project Archaeologist.	qualified archaeologist. **Timing:** During construction.	_____ Date	_____ Date		
	Frequency: As required.				
HAZ-1: The WCA shall implement the following fire prevention measures during construction and operation, as applicable: ○ Prevent the establishment or control invasive plant species that can increase the risk of fire; ○ Prohibit smoking within the park; ○ Prohibit all persons from lighting or maintaining fire of any kind, unless permit has been issued by the Watershed Conservation Authority; ○ Prohibit the use of powered hobby motors and rockets that utilize a combustive fuel or rocket motor; ○ Prohibit the use of power tools during periods of high and very high fire hazards; ○ Limit public use of the park on red flag or high fire risk days, as	**Activity:** Implement fire prevention measures during construction and operation. **Timing:** During construction and operation. **Frequency:** As required.	**Construction Contractor** _____ Initials _____ Date	**Watershed Conservation Authority** _____ Initials _____ Date	None required.	

Mitigation Measure	Monitoring Activity/Timing / Frequency/ Schedule	Implementation Responsibility/ Verification	Responsibility for Oversight of Compliance/ Verification	Outside Agency Coordination	Comments
determined by the National Weather Service or any other governmental agency; ○ Limit driving on undeveloped areas to maintenance and emergency vehicles; ○ During periods of high and very high fire hazard, prohibit the driving of maintenance vehicles into undeveloped areas of the property except for emergencies.					

June 16, 2016 - Item 14

RESOLUTION 2016-29

RESOLUTION OF THE WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY APPROVING AND ADOPTING A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND A MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM FOR THE CANYON INN SUPPLEMENT TO THE RIVER WILDERNESS PARK MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) has been established as a joint powers agency between the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District; and

WHEREAS, the WCA has further been established to focus on projects which will provide open space, habitat restoration, and watershed improvement projects in both the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers watershed; and

WHEREAS, prior to the adoption of this Resolution, the WCA prepared and adopted a Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan, identifying the development of new park facilities to include a park pavilion, a group picnic area, new hiking trails, river overlooks, a nature play area, habitat restoration, a cafe and information building to be operated by a concessionaire, and traffic calming and bike path extension along State Route 39; and

WHEREAS, the WCA has evaluated potential environmental effects of the project through the preparation and circulation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration ("MND") incorporated herein by this reference. This process included the following actions:

A. A public notice of the availability of a draft Initial Study and MND was sent to property owners adjacent to the project area, and to organizations and individuals who requested notice with the notice specifying the period during which comments would be received, the date, time, and place of a community meeting to provide comments.

B. A Notice of Preparation was transmitted to the Governor's Office of Planning and Research and the State Clearinghouse (SCH No. 2015121010) on or about December 2, 2015 for distribution to responsible, trustee, and state agencies with jurisdiction over the resources affected by the Project. The Notice of Preparation was also filed with the County Clerk on or about December 2, 2015.

C. The 30-day review period for the MND was initiated on December 2, 2015 for public review and distribution to responsible, trustee, and public agencies with jurisdiction over the resource affected by the Project. Copies of the draft documents were available for review at the office of the WCA, as well as on the WCA's website (www.wca.ca.gov).

D. Comments and recommendation on the MND were received by the WCA before the end of the review period on January 15, 2016.

WHEREAS, in connection with the approval of a project involving the preparation of an initial study/mitigated negative declaration that identifies one or more significant environmental effects, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires the decision making body of the lead agency to

incorporate feasible mitigation measures that would reduce those significant environment effects to a less-than-significant level; and

WHEREAS, whenever a lead agency approves a project requiring the implementation of measures to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment, CEQA also requires a lead agency to adopt a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program to ensure compliance with the mitigation measures during project implementation; and

WHEREAS, the WCA is the lead agency on the Project, and the WCA Governing Board is the decision-making body for the proposed Project; and

WHEREAS, all actions required to be taken by applicable law related to the preparation, circulation, and review of the MND have been taken; and

WHEREAS, a MND has been prepared consisting of the Initial Study, all comments and recommendation received during the public review period, and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and

WHEREAS, the WCA made its decision to adopt the MND for this Project in light of the record as a whole as set forth in these findings; and

WHEREAS, the WCA, in adopting the MND for this Project, of which these findings are a part, did so through the exercise of independent and review after finding substantial evidence, in light of the record as a whole, to support the adoption of the MND; and

WHEREAS, the WCA has made its decision to adopt the MND in the light of all the testimony and evidence presented at or prior to the close of the noticed public review period, including letters, reports, comments, analyses, etc., which the WCA after review and comment by its staff critically reviewed, corrected, and augmented where necessary, as set forth in the record and procedural findings on this Project, NOW

Therefore be it resolved that the WCA hereby:

1. **ADOPTS** the staff report dated June 16, 2016.

2. **ADOPTS** the MND presented to the WCA, which reviewed and considered the information contained in said MND prior to deciding whether to approve the proposed Project.

3. **FINDS** the MND has been thoroughly reviewed and analyzed by the WCA staff.

4. **FINDS** that the draft documents circulated for public review reflect the WCA's own independent judgment and the MND as certified by this Resolution also reflects the independent judgment of the WCA.

5. **ADOPTS** the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program set forth in the MND, incorporated herein by the reference, as the mitigation monitoring and reporting program for the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Master Plan.

6. **FINDS** for the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program has been prepared in accordance with CEQA and CEQA Guidelines.

7. **DIRECTS** the Executive Officer, or designee, to oversee the implementation of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

8. **DIRECTS** the Executive Officer, or designee, to file a Notice of Determination within five (5) working days after approval of the Project.

9. **DIRECTS** the Executive Officer, or designee, to make the project plans and other related materials that constitute the record of the proceedings upon which its decision is based available at the WCA office, 100 North Old San Gabriel Canyon Road, Azusa, California to facilitate public access to these documents.

~ End of Resolution ~

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Motion: _____ Second: _____

Ayes: _____ Nays: _____ Abstentions: _____

Passed and Adopted by the Board of the
WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
On June 16, 2016

_____
Brian Mejia, Chair

ATTEST:_____
Terry Fujimoto
Deputy Attorney General

June 16, 2016 - Item 14

RESOLUTION 2016-30

RESOLUTION OF THE WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY APPROVING THE ENTRY IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT OF THE CANYON INN SUPPLEMENT TO THE RIVER WILDERNESS PARK MASTER PLAN, FOR WHICH AN INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION WAS PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

WHEREAS, the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) has been established as a joint powers agency between the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District; and

WHEREAS, the WCA has further been established to focus on projects which will provide open space, habitat restoration, and watershed improvement projects in both the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers watershed; and

WHEREAS, the description of the Entry Improvements Project of the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan is, by this reference, incorporated into this Resolution as if fully set forth herein; and

WHEREAS, an initial study/mitigated negative declaration prepared for this Project concluded that implementation could result in a number of significant effects on the environment and identified mitigation measures that would reduce the significant effects to a less-than-significant level; and

WHEREAS, in connection with the approval of a project involving the preparation of an initial study/mitigated negative declaration that identifies one or more significant environmental effects, the Californian Environmental Quality Act, as amended ("CEQA"), requires the decision making body of the lead agency to incorporate feasible mitigation measures that would reduce those significant environment effects to a less-than-significant level; and

WHEREAS, whenever a lead agency approves a project requiring the implementation of measures to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment, CEQA also requires a lead agency to adopt a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program to ensure compliance with the mitigation measures during project implementation; and

WHEREAS, the WCA is the lead agency on the Project, and the WCA Governing Board is the decision-making body for the proposed Project; and

WHEREAS, prior to the adoption of this Resolution, the WCA reviewed, considered, and adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan in accordance with the requirements of the CEQA and state and local guidelines implementing CEQA; and

WHEREAS, the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Project are, by this reference, incorporated into this Resolution as if fully set forth herein; and

WHEREAS, the Project will not individually or cumulatively have an adverse effect on wildlife resources, as defined in Section 711.2 of the California Department of Fish and Game Code; NOW

Therefore be it resolved that the WCA hereby:

1. **ADOPTS** the staff report dated June 16, 2016.

2. **FINDS** all actions required to be taken by applicable laws in connection with the approval of the Entry Improvements Project of the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan have been taken.

3. **APPROVES** the development of the Entry Improvements Project of the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan.

4. **FINDS** for the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program has been prepared in accordance with CEQA and CEQA Guidelines.

5. **DIRECTS** the Executive Officer, or designee, to oversee the development of the Entry Improvements Project of the Canyon Inn Supplement to the River Wilderness Park Master Plan.

~ End of Resolution ~

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Motion: _____ Second: _____

Ayes: _____ Nays: _____ Abstentions: _____

Passed and Adopted by the Board of the
WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
On June 16, 2016

_____
Brian Mejia, Chair

ATTEST:_____
Terry Fujimoto
Deputy Attorney General