

DATE: January 17, 2019

TO: WCA Governing Board

FROM: Joseph Gonzalez, Project Manager

THROUGH: Mark Stanley, Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Item 22: Consideration of a resolution to request and accept funding from the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy for the San Gabriel River Confluence with Cattle Canyon Improvements project. (RMC09105).

RECOMMENDATION: That the Watershed Conservation Authority Governing Board request and accept a grant augmentation of \$79,000 from the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) for the San Gabriel River Confluence with the Cattle Canyon Improvements Project (RMC 09105) increasing the total grant amount to \$869,584 to cover costs related to the matter of Save Our Access – San Gabriel Mountains v. WCA, et al., Los Angeles County Superior Court Case No. 18STCP02984.

DESCRIPTION: Secure grant funding from the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy to defend the San Gabriel River Confluence with Cattle Canyon Improvements project's certified California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Environmental Impact Report which identifies five sustainable recreational model projects in the Angeles Forest and San Gabriel Mountains National Monument, Exhibit A: Certified NOD

BACKGROUND: The San Gabriel River Confluence with the Cattle Canyon Improvements Project proposes to better manage the recreation use and balance the needs for resource protection; in order to implement the project, the WCA partnered with the U.S. Forest Service through a cooperative agreement. This cooperative agreement will develop a project that promotes sustainable recreation and active uses in the ANF. The future desired condition to be advanced by the proposed project includes developing environmentally sustainable recreation opportunities to meet the needs of a growing urban and culturally diverse population, particularly for day use, Exhibit B: East Fork Project Concept Plan

The project seeks the following goals and objectives:

- Provide recreation facilities and infrastructure that are high quality, well-maintained, safe, accessible and consistent with visitors' expectations.
- Shift and concentrate recreational use to certain areas in order to minimize adverse effects over a broader area.
- Promote stewardship of public land by providing quality and sustainable recreation opportunities that result in increased visitor satisfaction.
- Allow for better management of the recreation resources on the Forest.
- Improve riparian habitat conditions in certain areas and make progress toward enhancing stream habitat conditions by restoring vegetation, minimizing invasive plants and noxious weed presence, and developing management strategies to regulate access.

During the summers' of 2013 and 2014, an outreach program focusing on the prevention of specific harmful recreational behaviors was conducted. The outreach program informed the completion of a planning study and a Final Concept Site Plan for which environmental assessments in compliance with California Environmental Quality

Act (CEQA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Endangered Species Act, and other applicable laws has been completed.

Environmental process WCA and ANF Staff evaluated the proposed actions contained within the Final Concept Plan, identifying potentially significant impacts to the federally threatened Santa Ana Sucker, thusly the project may be shifting concentration of recreational use to certain areas of EFSGR in order to minimize adverse effects over a broader area. Construction related impacts may be significant as well, including installation of abutments for a proposed pedestrian bridge.

Based on the potential for significant impacts an Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/EIR) was prepared. The certification of the EIR and approval of the San Gabriel River Confluence with the Cattle Canyon Improvements Project was approved by the WCA Board on October 25, 2018. The Final EIS is planned to have a signed Record of Decision by U.S. Forest Service in Spring/Summer 2019.

On November 28, 2018, Save Our Access – San Gabriel Mountains v. WCA, et al., Los Angeles County Superior Court Case No. 18STCP02984 was filed with the court. A mandatory settlement meeting is scheduled between the parties for January 22, 2019 in Azusa. RMC awarded funds will be utilized to cover costs associated with this matter.

FISCAL INFORMATION: The RMC grant augmentation would add \$79,000 in additional funding bringing the total value of the grant to \$869,584 for costs related to the legal matter. If approved, the FY18/19 capital budget will be updated to reflect the change in value.

ORIGINAL FILED

OCT 30 2018

Notice of Determination

Appendix D

LOS ANGELES, COUNTY CLERK

TO:

☒ Office of Planning and Research

For U.S. Mail:

P.O. Box 3044

Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

Street Address:

1400 Tenth Street

Sacramento, CA 95814

☒ County Clerk

County of: Los Angeles

Address: 12400 Imperial Highway

Norwalk, CA 90650

FROM:

Public Agency: Watershed Conservation AuthorityAddress: 100 N. Old San Gabriel Canyon RoadAzusa, CA 91702Contact: Mark StanleyPhone: (626) 815-1019

Lead Agency (if different from above):

Same as above

Address:

Contact:

Phone:

Subject: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resources Code.State Clearinghouse Number (if submitted to State Clearinghouse): 2016101039Project Title: San Gabriel River Confluence with Cattle Canyon Improvements ProjectProject Location (include county): East Fork San Gabriel River within the Angeles National Forest (see attached map)

Project Description: The proposed project includes the development of new management strategies and improvements to protect and restore the multi-use areas of five distinct project areas for future public enjoyment. Proposed enhancements include the development of new picnic areas, pedestrian trails, river access points and upgrades to existing facilities, improvements to paved and unpaved roadways, parking improvements, restrooms and refuse disposal improvements, restoration of riparian and upland vegetation communities of the EFSGR and Cattle Canyon Creek, and implementation of a Forest Closure Order to prohibit overnight camping.

This is to advise that the Watershed Conservation Authority has approved the above described project on
(☒ Lead Agency or ☐ Responsible Agency)

October 25, 2018 and has made the following determinations regarding the above described projects.
(Date)

1. The project [☐ will ☒ will not] have a significant effect on the environment.
2. ☒ An Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
☐ A Negative Declaration was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation measures [☒ were ☐ were not] made a condition of the approval of the project.
4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan [☒ was ☐ was not] adopted for this project.
5. A statement of Overriding Considerations [☐ was ☒ was not] adopted for this project.
6. Findings [☒ were ☐ were not] made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

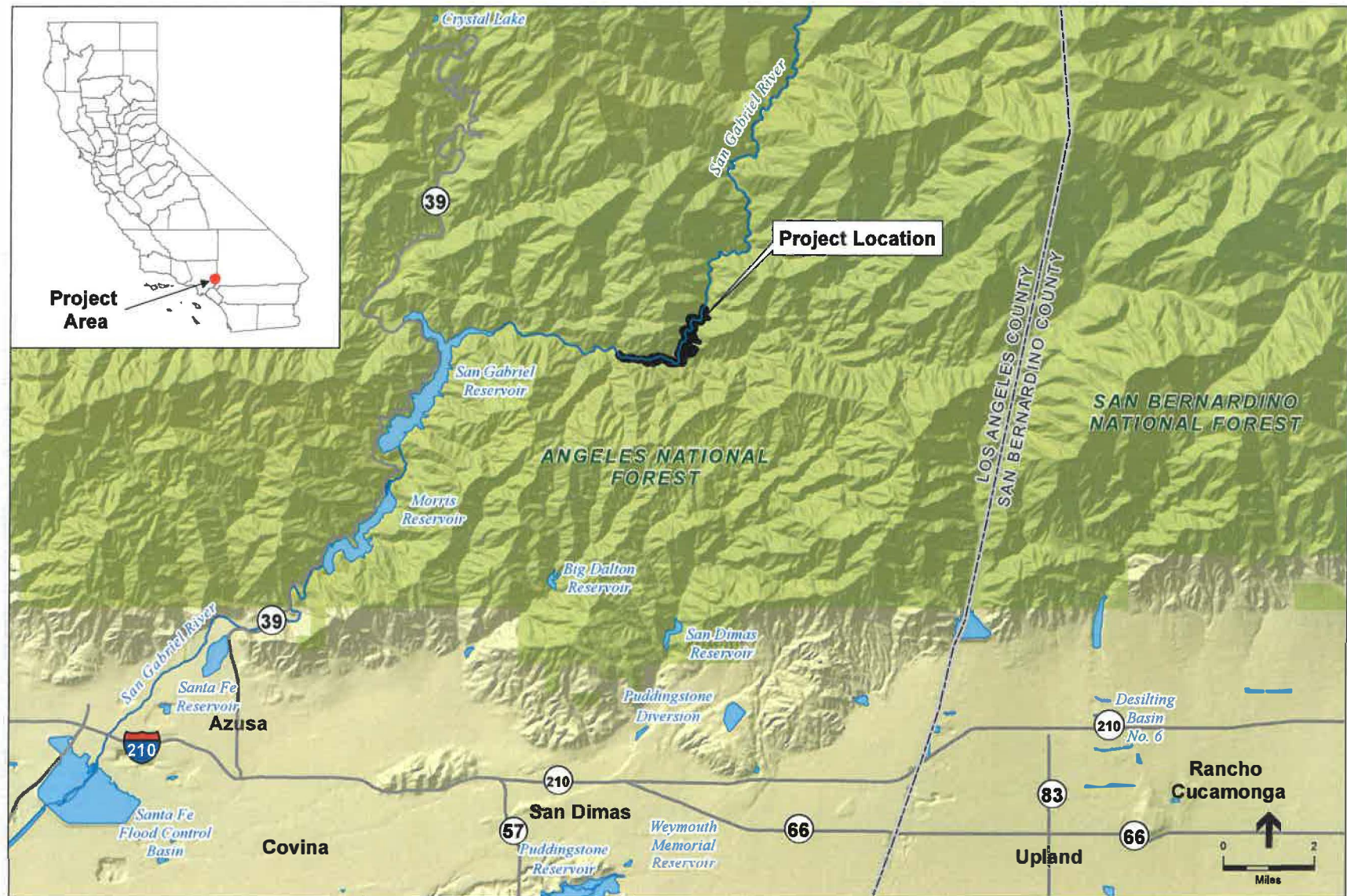
This is to certify that the final EIR with comments and responses and record of project approval, or the Negative Declaration, is available to the General Public at:

Online Website: https://www.wca.ca.gov/cattle_canyon

Signature (Public Agency)

Title: Executive OfficerDate: 10/26/18

Date Received filing at OPR: _____



SOURCE: ESRI

San Gabriel River Confluence with Cattle Canyon Improvements Project . 140225.01

Figure 2-1
Project Vicinity

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

JANUARY 30, 2017

DESCRIPTION:

Day-use recreation is enhanced by a continuous 2.0 mile "East Fork Scenic Trail". The trail is located adjacent to the road with views of the river and provides access to overlooks, river access trails and backcountry trailheads. Loading/shuttle stops are provided.

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

PROJECT AREA TOTALS	
Trailheads	4
Restrooms	10
Crosswalks	7
Designated Picnic Areas	6
East Fork Scenic Trail (mi.)	2.0
Interpretive Sites	4
River Access Points	6
USFS Visitor Kiosk	3
Bus/Tram Stop	3
Parking	270

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

OAKS AREAS

- Beginning of East Fork Scenic Trail
- River access point with parking, native tree plantings, East Fork Scenic Trail, new restrooms, East Fork Scenic Trail interpretive sign

CONFLUENCE AREA

- Scenic overlook with Eldoradoville interpretive element, East Fork Scenic Trail interpretive sign
- River access and new single restroom
- Pedestrian bridge (parallel with existing bridge) and shuttle stop
- Portions of road are realigned to accommodate East Fork Scenic Trail

JUNCTION AREA

- Three way stop with emergency vehicle turnaround
- Portions of road are realigned to accommodate East Fork Scenic Trail

HEATON FLAT AREA

- Enhanced picnic area with improved trailhead, interpretive sign, new restroom & river access

COYOTE FLAT, OVERLOOK, FIRESTATION & CANYON AREAS

- Developed picnic area & new restroom with maintenance access road
- Scenic overlook with planters, seatwalls, native tree plantings, monument sign, "Geology Hut" interpretive building, USFS visitor kiosk, and perimeter path, East Fork Scenic Trail interpretive sign
- Camp Bonita Road turnaround, loading area/shuttle stop, cross walk, Heaton Flat trailhead, new restroom
- Developed parking area with native tree plantings, parking kiosk, bus parking, new restroom & picnic area
- Stairs from parking area lead across boardwalk bridge to Botanical Interpretive Trail trailhead
- Stairway leading from East Fork Scenic Overlook to Coyote Flat

LEGEND

- River access points
- Interpretive sites
- Restrooms
- Designated picnic area
- Trailhead
- Crosswalk
- USFS visitor kiosk
- Loading area/shuttle stop
- Paved road
- Trail and/or Maintenance access road
- East Fork Scenic Trail
- Parking
- East Fork
- Existing Cattle Canyon Bridge with new pedestrian bridge



SCALE: 1" = 300'

January 17, 2019 – Item 22

RESOLUTION 2019-09

**RESOLUTION TO REQUEST AND ACCEPT FUNDING FROM RIVERS
AND MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY FOR THE SAN GABRIEL RIVER
CONFLUENCE WITH CATTLE CANYON IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT**

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

WHEREAS, the Watershed Conservation Authority (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, this action request funding from Rivers and Mountains Conservancy for the San Gabriel River Confluence with Cattle Canyon Improvements project; and

WHEREAS, this action accepts funding from Rivers and Mountains Conservancy for the San Gabriel River Confluence with Cattle Canyon Improvements project; and

WHEREAS, the proposed action is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act; NOW

Therefore be it resolved that the WCA hereby:

1. **FINDS** that this action is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the WCA.
2. **FINDS** that the actions contemplated by this resolution are exempt from the environmental impact report requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
3. **ADOPTS** the staff report dated January 17, 2019.
4. **REQUEST** funding from Rivers and Mountains Conservancy for the San Gabriel River Confluence with Cattle Canyon Improvements project in the amount of \$79,000.
5. **ACCEPTS** funding from Rivers and Mountains Conservancy for the San Gabriel River Confluence with Cattle Canyon Improvements project in the amount of \$79,000.

~ End of Resolution ~

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Motion: _____ Second: _____

Ayes: _____ Nays: _____ Abstentions: _____

Passed and Adopted by the Board of the
WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
On January 17, 2019

Dan Arrighi, Governing Board Vice Chair

ATTEST: _____
David Edsall, Jr.
Deputy Attorney General