Welcome and introductions
Terri Grant, Principal Engineer, welcomed the members of the committee and attendees.

Approval of July 6, 2015 Meeting Summary
Meeting Summary approved.

Items for the Committee’s Information

LA River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study Update

Eileen Takata, watershed program manager for the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) LA District, presented the first update on the LA River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study (Study) since the Civil Works Review Board on the Recommended Plan for Congress, formerly known as Alternative 20. Ms. Takata thanked the City of LA and its partners for the cooperation in this project. Ms. Takata stated that the River Cooperation Committee could serve as an accountability buddy for some of the items that came up at the review board as well as issues that could come up in the future. The leadership at the Corps heard the message that the river is of national significance with tremendous support. Ms. Takata gave a brief overview of the Study and the project elements along each of the 8 reaches. At the Civil Works Review Board, Col. Colloton and Mayor Garcetti talked about the 719 acres to be acquired and how it will benefit the habitat and biodiversity in the region during the Civil Works Review Board. From the 11 miles there are 4 to 5 significant spots of restoration: Verdugo Wash and Arroyo Seco confluences, Taylor Yard, Los Angeles State Historic Park, LATC (Piggyback Yard). Reach 1 will include riparian habitat restoration at both banks of the river. Reach 2 comprises of terracing and a transition to vertical walls which will widen the channel bed area. On Reach 3 at the Verdugo Wash tributary confluence restoration will occur mostly on the Verdugo side. The most exciting part is opening up of the confluence of storm drains converted into daylighted streams on reach 4. There will be a widening and terracing of reach 5 where the trapezoidal bank is to be planted as well. Floodplain restoration and River widening will continue on reach 6. At the Arroyo Seco confluence, reach 7 will include widening and marsh restoration of the confluence. Reach 8 is the biggest area of floodplain restoration with riverbed widening, naturalization and bank terracing covering over 100 acres.
The total revised construction cost was estimated at $1.356 billion due to the high land acquisition costs. The ACOE posted the Study for State and Agency review on October 2nd, 2015. Tentatively, State and Agency review period ends on November 1st 2015 and will go up to the Chief for signature on December 15, 2015. The project is estimated to start construction in summer of 2018.

Questions and Comments:

Shahram Kharaghani asked when construction is expected to start. Eileen deferred the question to David Van Dorpe and was informed that the project is now in the phase of review by the State of California and other federal agencies and interested parties can provide comments. It needs Congressional authorization before construction can begin. The authorizing bill is called the Water Resources Development Act which is ideally introduced every other year. Last one to be introduced was in 2015, and the one before that in 2007. So, if a bill is introduced in 2017 construction could be expected sometime in 2018.

Yuval Bar Zemer of Linear City asked if there is an explanation as to which component of construction comes first. Eileen noted that the project is subject to availability of the land.

Mr. Zemer asked who makes the final decision on the schedule. David noted that there is a combined team between the ACOE and City. Executive leadership and regional office will be heavily involved. Decisions on the sequencing may happen after the fact. Acquisition of land will be a contributing factor.

**Los Angeles River Real-Time Condition System**

Mark Hanna presented an update on the LA River Real-Time Condition System in the LA River. The system will automatically provide alerts and provide advance notice which will alert users of rain and rising waters in the River. The alerts would serve to inform agencies when to shut down access to the invert of the channel. The system monitors flow data and the height of the river in the channel during a storm event. The goal of this monitoring system is to provide alerts and advance notice through multiple media in regards to how safe any in-channel use of the river is at any time.

The system is a cloud-based system and can be monitored with any device with internet connection. Mr. Hanna also presented possible alert systems, such as flashing lights that can be used to indicate the current conditions of the river. Gauges, such as the one on the 7th Street Bridge, can measure level of the water at the river up to a half inch in accuracy. The Rio Besos in Barcelona is a current example of a monitoring system. This system includes a massive centralized command system. Alerts and sirens are used to let the public know if the river is unsafe to be in.

Mark ended the presentation with a sample set of data from the precipitation event over the prior weekend. Data being collected, analyses and report can be expected to be made available soon.

Questions and Comments:

Deborah Weintraub asked about the power source of the gauges. Mark noted that the gauges are both battery and solar powered.

Deborah also asked about the weather forecast predictions vs actual rain. Mark noted that they are logging forecast information at this time and is working with NOAA to get a better understanding of these forecasts to determine at which point to shown down access to the river.

Christopher Stone asked about the direction of storms and the effect it has on response time. Mark noted in this model they do not track the direction of storms. However, they are able to monitor the rain gauges and tell which ones get hit first by a localized storm system.

David Van Dorpe added that how fast this information can be relayed to the bike path user is the critical component that needs to be figured out. Gary Hildebrand also added that new technology comes down to the comfort level in part of the agencies responsible for the river. And that it is important to figure out how far in advance to notify folks to exit the river. As more data is gathered there will be a better understanding of this.
**CURRENT: Public Art Biennial along LA River**

Felicia Filer, director of Public Art for the LA City Department of Cultural Affairs, began by thanking the LA River Revitalization staff for their support and guidance with this project. CURRENT:LA Public Art Biennial is a temporary public art initiative conceived by the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA). This project is being funded by a grant from Bloomberg philanthropies. One of the goals of this temporary art project is to give an opportunity for artists to respond to some of the current issues affecting the City of Los Angeles. The proposed theme for this first installment is based on water due to the current drought conditions. The proposal includes commissioning art at 15 sites throughout the city touching on every council district. Half of sites are located at or near the LA River. The initiative is expected to launch next in July of 2016. Examples of installations can be of all media from video to projections to sculpture and two-dimensional works. Every two years there will be another exhibition with a different theme. The artists, programs and locations can be announced in December. Another goal of this project is to have one art exhibition to be permanent from each biennial. DCA will come back to this committee once they have more specifics at the January meeting.

Questions and Comments:

A member of the audience asked about the members of the curatorial committee and if they have been publicly listed. Felicia noted that they have not been publicly announced yet. However, she noted that the team comprises of Artistic Director Marc Pally, Rita Gonzalez from the LA County Museum of Art, Irene Tsatsos from the Armory Center in Pasadena, Karen Moss from Otis College of Art and Design, and Ruth Esteves from REDCAT.

Deborah asked about the duration of the exhibit. Felicia noted that the art pieces will be available for one month.

Shahram asked about the theme of this first biennial exhibit. Felicia responded that for this first installment the theme is water.

**51-Mile Integrated Design Study**

Omar Brownson, the Executive Director with the LA River Revitalization Corporation (LARRC), and Anand Devarajan from Gehry Partners provided an update on Gehry Partners’ research and study along the LA River. Mr. Brownson stated that there is tremendous momentum in the LA River at the moment and now is the time to develop a more cohesive version of the entire 51 miles of the LA River.

Mr. Brownson stated that the last few months have been comprised of research on the work that has been done to date, such as reviewing various master plans. There are currently a number of master plans out there from the City of LA, the County, among others but the question that still remains is how these plans can better come together to achieve a common goal. One interesting condition of the LA River found during the course of initial research was that the full capacity of flood control channel occurs less than 1% of the time. Dry conditions occur 90 to 95% of the time. This presents a great opportunity diversify the purpose of the flood channel and to use it even during minor rain events. Gehry Partners’ collaborated with Trimble, a GPS commercial solutions company, to help map and create the first 3D computer model of the entire river channel. The research team identified similar information from each master plan and then organized the information into a series of evaluation criteria, as an effort to create an organizational structure to coordinate information between existing plans. The categories of information range from key water issues to ecology and open space issues to public health and transportation issues. This information was organized and collected in a manner that can be overlaid to understand important and new relationships that can help public agencies, stakeholder and communities prioritize criteria.

Questions and Comments:
Deborah asked about the availability of Trimble’s model for a variety of projects. Omar noted that their goal is to make Trimble’s model open source and that an agreement to make it public is being worked on. Deborah lastly recommended looking at what information public agencies already have. LARCC will work with the County, ACOE and City to obtain data on soft bottom sections.

David noted that this is a great resource to use in our projects. David asked about the next phases of this project. Anand Devarajan noted that the next phase is to focus on the hydrologic analysis during the next 3 to 6 months. They are starting to test all their evaluation criteria and see what works where along the river.

LA River Anza Trail Announcement

Patrick Johnston, from the National Park Service, and Pauline Louie, from the Urban Waters Federal Partnership, presented an update on the Anza Trail Certification between the City of LA and NPS. The City of LA and the National Park Service will celebrate the certification of the Anza Trail along the LA River at an upcoming event happening on October 15 (at a new time: 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.). The Anza Trail traversed most of the City of LA following most of the LA River corridor and brought with them history and culture that is intertwined with the City of Los Angeles. Additionally, as part of their centennial celebration, NPS launched the “Find Your Park Campaign” earlier this year which was designed to inspire all people to connect with, enjoy, and support America’s national parks. Last month, the White house launched the “Every Kid in a Park” program, where all 4th graders across the country will get a free pass to experience their federal public land and waters in person throughout the 2015 – 2016 school year. During the event on October 15, 450 students from 6 river-adjacent schools will receive their free annual pass. They will also have an opportunity to participate in 9 learning stations. Moreover, they will also be sworn in as Junior Rangers possibly by Mayor Garcetti. Pauline lastly added that this upcoming celebratory event aims to put the spotlight on the LA River at a national level that in turn can help leverage resources for its revitalization.

Questions and Comments:

No questions for this item.

Agency Updates

- City of Los Angeles (Michael Affeldt)
  - Arbor study now available at lariver.org. Can also be viewed in libraries within the study area or by appointment at LA Riverworks office (contact Michael Affeldt).
  - Demolition of the 6th Street viaduct project will commence on January 2016.
  - Bikeway between Coldwater Canyon and Whitsett along the LA River is now in construction. Ground breaking was in June 2015.
  - The Recreation zone in the LA River is now closed for the season. Thanks to MRCA and everyone else involved.

- US Army Corps of Engineers (David Van Dorpe)
  - LA River Study released for State and Agency review.
  - Due to the lack of staff and funding, ACOE announced that there will be further delay in reviewing 408 permits for river-related projects.
  - Draft of Sepulveda Basin new vegetation management plan with environmental assessment expected to be out by this fall for public review.

- Los Angeles County Flood Control District (Richard Gomez)
  - The LA Basin Conservation Study in partnership with the Bureau of Reclamation has reached a number of milestones that include the climate change assessment, future water supply and demand projections. Last two milestones that are in the process of completion
are the modeling for stormwater capture and an economic trade-off analysis. Expected completion by the end of this year.

- The Arroyo Seco Feasibility Study, in partnership with the ACOE, is following a similar path to that of the LA River. The ACOE is now working on evaluating a number of alternatives to complete a Tentative Selective Plan (TSP) by May of 2016.
- LACFCD Centennial celebration trailer video was showcased to the audience. A longer version will be posted on our website soon.

**Call for Projects for Future Meetings**
Applications requested by October 30th

**Public Comments/Other Items:**
No public comments.

**Next Meeting:**
The next RCC meeting will be hosted by the City of Los Angeles on Monday, January 4, 2016 (Tentative), from 1:00 – 3:00 pm, Los Angeles City Hall, Room 1060 (10th Floor), 200 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**Closing Comments**
Gary Hildebrand thanked all committee members and attendees for their participation.

Comments regarding this meeting summary should be directed to Jose Reyes, jlreyes@dpw.lacounty.gov, and Kevin Kim, kkim@dpw.lacounty.gov.

For more information about the LA River Cooperation Committee, and to access meeting documents, please visit: [www.lariver.org/rcc](http://www.lariver.org/rcc).