Welcome and Introductions

Gary Lee Moore, City Engineer, welcomed the members of the committee and attendees.

Approval of July 9, 2012 Meeting Summary

Meeting Summary approved.

Items for the Committee's Information

USACE LA River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study (Update given by Carol Armstrong, City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Engineering, LA River Project Office)

C. Armstrong provided a status update on the progress of the Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study (Study) which has just completed its In Progress Review (IPR). The IPR began with a three day workshop from October 29th-31st, 2012, and concluded in early January 2013. USACE High level staff from around the United States participated along with the Bureau of Engineering to discuss details of the proposed plans for the Study. Hydrolics and hydrology, biology, economics, and the Consolidated Habitat Assessment Protocol (CHAP) were analyzed during this time. It was also determined that due to urban Los Angeles’ high cost of real estate, the Study would be unique among other projects and would need a policy memo, which is currently being drafted. We anticipate that the Study will move forward to the Alternative Formulation Briefing (AFB) in April 2013, with the Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP) and Draft Environmental Impact Report due out in June 2013, and Civil Works Review Board in September 2013. It is expected that the Chief Engineers Report will be complete in December 2013. The Study covers an 11-mile stretch of the LA River from the Headworks site adjacent to Griffith Park, which is also involved in a USACE Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study, through the Glendale Narrows, to 1st Street in downtown LA.

Questions and Comments: None given for this item

Humboldt Stormwater Greenway (Update given by Deborah Weintraub, City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Engineering, and Wing Tam, City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Sanitation)

Wing Tam together with Deborah Weintraub provided an update on this greenway project which is located off of Avenue 19, south on the 110 Freeway, on Humboldt Street. The project is being built on City owned land, (a paper street), has a 135-acre drainage area, and will create an acre greenway adjacent to the LA River. When this project is completed, it will help with meeting TMDL’s requirements.
and will feature a daylighted stormdrain, greenway with pedestrian and bicycle paths, solar lighting, swales, native landscaping, and spillway. This project will provide greenspace in an underserved area. The Bureau of Sanitation in funding this $4 million dollar project and completion is expected in summer of 2013. Funded by the Sewer Construction Maintenance Program

Questions and Comments:
Chris Stone (LACFCD) asked if stormwater was (currently) draining directly into the LA River and Wing Tam confirmed that this was the case. After the project is complete, stormwater will be treated before it discharges into the LA River.

Rudy Lee (LACFCD) wanted to know if you can access the LA River from this project and Deborah Weintraub explained that it is separated by active rail lines (MTA) and is not currently accessible.

Joyce Dillard (Resident) concerned about current gang activity and crime in the area, and security and maintenance of the project. Gary Moore acknowledged concern and will work with Council District 1 on this.

LA/Glendale Water Reclamation Plant Park (Update given by Gene Greene, City of LA, Bureau of Sanitation)

This greenway project is located on the LA/Glendale Water Reclamation Plant Site, adjacent to the LA River on the east bank. When completed, it will establish 275 feet of greenway with a decomposed granite path along the LA River. This project is funded by the Bureau of Sanitation and is expected to be complete in June 2013.

Questions and Comments:
Charles Eddy (Friends of the LA River) inquired if there was any possibility to link this path to North Atwater Park through the Central Service Yard. Darryl Ford, Recreation and Parks, responded that there may be long term possibilities to link to North Atwater Park, in the future, if resources become available for relocation and it is feasible.

Pilot Recreation Zone in the Glendale Narrows (Update given by Chief Fernando Gomez, and Barbara Romero, Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority (MRCA) and Jon Kopitzke, Recreation and Parks)

The proposed recreation zone will establish a five mile stretch in the Glendale Narrows of the LA River that will be open to unstructured recreational activities in 2013 from Memorial Day to Labor Day, sunrise to sunset. Based on SB 1201, which directs recreational use in the LA River to be developed, the Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority and LA City Recreation and Parks have taken the lead on this effort. It was suggested that the recreation zone begin at North Atwater Park (east bank), pending construction limitation associated with bridges in the vicinity, and end at Oso Park in Elysian Valley (west bank). Signage will be used to mark entry and exit areas for the zone and for kayak put-in and take-out areas, as well as general rules and regulations for using the zone; MRCA and its partners will pay for signage. It is proposed that a shuttle will take people from designated parking areas to and from exit and entry points. An easement under a transmission line has been requested from the Department of Water and Power to allow for entry and exit of the river channel.

Questions and Comments:
David Van Dorpe (USACE) acknowledged that the project proponents will work with USACE’s Asset Management Division (Terri Kaplan) to obtain permits and/or permissions.

Gary Hildebrand (LACFCD) is generally supportive of the concept but needs to work out details with the project proponent.

Kelli Bernard (LADWP) will continue to work with DWP Real Estate to assist project proponent with an easement under the transmission lines.
Lupe Vela (Council District 1/Ad Hoc River Committee) this project will go before the Ad Hoc River Committee on January 28th and will use the North East Los Angeles Riverfront Collaborative to assist with this effort.

Sheila Irani (Council District 4) is supportive of active recreation and for continued effort to resolve and address the safety and access concerns of residents in Atwater Village and surrounding affected neighborhoods.

Joyce Dillard (Resident) would like to know how trash and liability issues will be addressed; her comment was noted.

Marion Dodge (Friends of Griffith Park) would like to have all maps and documents revised, acknowledging portions that are in Griffith Park (original land grant) and would like to know who will be patrolling the propose recreation zone. It was suggested that the MRCA and local authorities will continue to have authority and jurisdiction over the area.

Torin Dunnavant (Atwater Village Neighborhood Council) is concerned about potential parking issues and crime as a result of this program and would like to be included in the development of it.

Charles Eddy (Friends of the LA River) supports open access of the LA River but would like to know timeline for public review.

Omar Brownson (LA River Revitalization Corporation) notifies the Committee and project proponent of the Multi-modal Bridge construction south of North Atwater Park that is scheduled for spring 2013.

Craig Collins (Silverlake Reservoirs Conservancy) supports access and policing of the area.

Karin Flores (Friends of the LA River) inquired about permit(s) for fishing and kayaking, and if there was a cost to program. The project proponent responded that you will still need to obtain a fishing license, but you will not need a permit for kayaking and you will not be charged a fee for general access in the recreation zone.

Lupe Vela (Council District 1/ Ad Hoc River Committee) the National Park Service will provide staff to assist with this effort as well as signage for the program. Two public meetings will be held before the next Ad Hoc River Committee meeting on January 28th.

Barbara Romero and Chief Fernando Gomez (Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority) the MRCA currently operates ten pocket parks in the proposed recreation zone and plans to fund patrols in the area with existing revenue sources. Twenty-eight volunteers will also help patrol this area. The Los Angeles Police Department would still patrol in this area. It has also been discussed that large sponsored groups will need to pay for permits for activities in the LA River and a fishing license will still be required per California Fish and Game.

Agency Updates

- **US Army Corps of Engineers (Col. Mark Toy and David Van Dorpe)**
  - The Sepulveda Basin Master Plan (completed in 2010) and its subsequent Vegetative Management Plan proposed a five-year program in a portion of the Sepulveda Basin, between the dam and south of Burbank Boulevard; the Environmental Assessment was put out for public review in August 2012. Work began on December 10th and was stopped on December 12th due to tremendous community concern for the wildlife and habitat in the area that was disturbed. It was originally planned that this would be a three-phased process, first removing non-native vegetation, and then re-planting native prairie woodland vegetation. The USACE plans to pause this activity until they meet with stakeholders in the area.
Questions and Comments:
Glenn Bailey (Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area Steering Committee, Encino Neighborhood Council) would like to amend that the Sepulveda Basin is 2150 acres, much of which is leased to the City of LA, Recreation and Parks Department, however the area that was affected was not leased out and is operated by the US Army Corps. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area Committee was set up by the City of Los Angeles and the State of California, per a Memorandum of Understanding with funding provided by the California Department of Fish and Game. Mr. Bailey attended all three workshops for the Sepulveda Basin Master Plan and during that process was not aware of the intention to clear this portion or do vegetative management in this area. Would like accountability and resolve for this issue, along with replacing damaged landscaping and decomposed granite paths.

Lewis MacAdams (Friends of the LA River) is concerned that Friends of the LA River just helped to leverage almost $1 million dollars for the LA River Study and it is disappointing to see the USACE involved in the destruction of habitat adjacent to the LA River and the lack of communication to the public. The USACE needs to be more involved and responsive to the public and participate in River Cooperation Committee meetings where they can communicate to a public forum.

Joyce Dillard (Resident) has concern that federal and state regulations were not followed and would like to have public documents more easily accessible for review. The North Atwater Bridge should not be privatized when built and needs to respect the historic boundaries of Griffith Park and the original land grant.

Deborah George (Encino Neighborhood Council, Parks and Environmental Committee) would like to address the fact that it originally seemed per the Environmental Assessment, that only invasive removal would be done in this area, as it seems like a more extensive project was actually implemented. Also, crime reports in this area did not indicate that there was a public safety issue, which was one of the justifications for clearing this area.

Jan Kidwell (Sierra Club Angeles Chapter) is very upset about the lack of notification and communication of the vegetative management project and would like to be added to the list of interested parties for future activities and projects.

David Van Dorpe (USACE) acknowledges that communication could have been better, going beyond just complying with NEPA and that the work done here was extensive. In total, 80 tons of debris and trash were removed over 30 acres.

• LACFCD (Terri Grant):
  o The Los Angeles Basin Water Augmentation Study, which the LACFCD is undertaking in conjunction with the US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation is underway; the team is in the process of exploring the potential for increasing local water supplies, reducing flooding and surface pollution by capturing stormwater runoff for infiltration and groundwater recharge. It is Please visit: http://www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART/bsp/docs/fy2012/FactSheet-LosAngelesBasinStudy.pdf for more information.
  o The Tujunga Wash Ecosystem Restoration Project, phase II, had its ribbon cutting on August 15, 2012; this project was a joint effort between the LA County Flood Control District and the US Army Corps of Engineers.
  o The Strathern Wetlands project’s phase I construction is anticipated to be underway in summer of 2014. This project will convert a 46-acre, former construction debris landfill, into a multi-use facility. The project will provide flood protection, enhanced water quality, increased natural habitat, open space and recreational amenities to the Sun Valley community. The project will feature a 21-acre a detention pond, 10-acre wetlands, and 15 acres of recreational facilities. The project cost is estimates at $46 million with $17 million coming from Proposition O.
  o The Los Angeles River Headwaters Project will break ground in August of 2012; this project was recommended by the RCC on April 4, 2011. This project proposes to construct recreational trails on both banks of the river along a 1.25-mile reach from Owensmouth Avenue to Mason Avenue. Enhancements will include bioswales, native and drought-tolerant landscaping, improved fencing, educational and interpretive signage, two pedestrian bridges, and two undercrossings.
The North Valleyheart Riverwalk Project will begin construction in May 2013 and is anticipated to be complete in 2014. This project was funded with a $2 million grant from the California River Parkways Program. This project was recommended by the RCC on October 3, 2011.

- **City of Los Angeles (Carol Armstrong and Michael Affeldt):**
  - The Los Angeles Greenway Phase II, from Coldwater to Whitsett on the south bank of the LA River (Studio City), which was recommended by the RCC on January 9, 2012 was put out to bid and awarded in the amount of $4 million to Simgel Construction; the City is working with the Army Corps to address comments and move this project along.
  - North Atwater Multi-modal Bridge (River Revitalization Corporation), recommended by the RCC on April 4, 2011 has just completed its public review period for environmental (CEQA/NEPA) documentation. Construction is anticipated in spring of 2013.
  - Aliso Creek and Reseda River Loop Project, led by the Trust for Public Land (Tori Kjer), which proposes to vacate a street end at the confluence of Los Angeles River and Aliso Creek to create a park and river trail connection on an existing private parcel and DWP easement, is underway with the property map being finalized by DWP and BOE’s Land Development Group.
  - The White House Council for Environmental Quality’s Nancy Sutley attended the LA River Revitalization Corporation’s Let’s Talk River event held on October 5, 2012 where Mayor Villaraigosa was honored.
  - Friends of the Los Angeles River donated $970,000 towards the LA River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study on October 9, 2012.
  - The next LA River Update Meeting is anticipated in late spring of 2013 and will discuss the latest with the LA River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study.

**Public Comments/Other Items**

Mark Hanna (Geosyntec) provided an update on the Waterwheel Project, approved by the RCC in July 2012. Since the last update six months ago, a community meeting was held in August 2012, with another planned in February/March 2013. Geotech, environmental, and parcel mapping are underway and meeting with the County and related agencies are taking place for agreements and permits. In progress is plan for a two acre detention area to irrigate the LA State Historic Park with water from the LA River.

**Next Meeting**

- The next RCC meeting (tentative) will be hosted by LA County on Monday, April 8, 2013, from 1:00-3:00 pm, LACDPW, Conference Room A, 900 S. Fremont Avenue Alhambra, CA 91803.

Comments regarding this meeting summary should be directed to Carol Armstrong, Carol.Armstrong@lacity.org, Michael Affeldt, Michael.Affeldt@lacity.org, and Megan Whalen, Megan.Whalen@lacity.org.

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