

The Arroyo Seco Greenway

The Arroyo Seco means a lot of different things to different people. To some it is a neighborhood park. To others it is a canyon with delightful recreational opportunities. Some people view it as a transportation corridor, the site of the Arroyo Seco Parkway and the Gold Line. Others think of it as a watershed, canyon or stream, a tributary of the Los Angeles River. Of course the Arroyo Seco is also a cultural haven, rich in museums, art and educational institutions.

One concept that conveys all this and links the entire Arroyo Seco is *The Arroyo Seco Greenway*.

What is a Greenway?

All across America private citizens and public officials are working to create outdoor recreation opportunities and protect wildlife and our environment by establishing corridors of open space called greenways.

“Greenways connect. They tie together people, parks, historic sites, and natural areas. They follow streams and rivers, ridgelines, abandoned rail lines, hedgerows, canals, and other transportation corridors. All are unique, created through local initiative and reflecting a consensus of community needs and concerns.”ⁱ

Greenways:

- make communities better places to live by preserving and creating open spaces
- encourage physical fitness and healthy lifestyles
- create new opportunities for outdoor recreation and non-motorized transportation
- strengthen local economies
- protect the environment and
- preserve culturally and historically valuable areas

Types of Greenways

- Urban river greenways
- Recreational greenways
- Ecologically significant natural corridors
- Scenic and historic routes
- Comprehensive networks based on natural features

The Arroyo Seco has characteristics of all of these.

What Work Has Already Been Done?

- Arroyo Seco Watershed Restoration Feasibility Study
- Pasadena’s Arroyo Seco Master Plan
- Altadena and La Canada Trails Work
- Northeast Linkages in Los Angeles
- South Pasadena’s Nature Park

- Arroyo Seco Parkway Corridor Management Program
- Water Quality and Conservation studies
- Arroyo Seco Watershed Coordination Program
- US Army Corps of Engineers Arroyo Seco Ecosystem Restoration Study (now in process)
- Formation of CASO and CASA

Functions of the Arroyo Seco Greenway

- Linking the Mountains to Downtown
- Restoring the Arroyo Seco Stream and Watershed
- Multi-modal Transportation and Trail Connectivity
- Building Strong Sustainable Communities

Role for Neighborhood and Community-based Groups

Through CASO--the Council of Arroyo Seco Organization, each organization can undertake projects in a way that help it further its own organization goals while working in league with other Arroyo Seco allies.

Organizations can:

1. Get the word out to friends and neighbors
 - a. Sponsor hikes and walk
 - b. Discover The Arroyo; Explore the Arroyo
 - c. Campaign Launch Event
 - d. Promote the Arroyo Seco
2. Survey and discover:
 - a. trail gaps
 - b. invasive plants
 - c. barriers
 - d. water quality
 - e. habitat mapping
 - f. using GIS and GPS tools
3. Join the AS Greenway Task Force
4. Lobby local officials to support and sign the Greenway Agreement

Role for Agencies

The cities which make up the Arroyo Seco region (La Cañada Flintridge, Pasadena, South Pasadena and Los Angeles), the County (Altadena) and other agencies with authority in the region are already working together as the Council of Arroyo Seco Agencies (CASA). These agencies can participate in the Arroyo Seco Greenway by:

- developing a greenway agreement
- connecting trails and parklands
- planning and constructing projects
- adopting landscaping and design standards (such as the LA River Landscaping Guidelines and Plant Palette)

- joint promotional and tourism campaigns

The AS Greenway Agreement

The Arroyo Seco Greenway Agreement will provide a framework and a commitment from organizations and agencies to develop the Arroyo Seco Greenway. It will identify specific areas of cooperation (trail continuity, recreational improvements, parklands expansion, water quality improvement programs, water conservation objectives and watershed restoration projects) that agencies and organizations will pursue in the next ten years to make the Arroyo Seco Greenway a model of environmental stewardship and sustainability.

The agreement will be a document developed with extensive public input that organizations, cities and the county will be asked to adopt as a policy and operational agreement.

Benefits of Arroyo Seco Greenway

The Arroyo Seco Greenway will:

- Link the efforts of individuals, communities, organizations and agencies
- Provide a framework for Arroyo restoration and revitalization efforts
- Develop a governance agreement to authorize and activate agencies
- Link Arroyo efforts to LA River Revitalization

Timeline

June 30, 2005	Initial presentation to CASO
August 2005	Formation of AS Greenway Task Force
September 2005	Presentation to CASA
October 2005	Campaign Launch Event; Post Greenway Agreement for Public Comment
November – December 2005	Public meetings to discuss the Arroyo Seco Greenway
January 2005	Consideration and Adoption of AS Greenway Agreement by Cities, County

For more information about the Arroyo Seco Greenway, please contact the Arroyo Seco Foundation at (626) 584-9902 or greenway@arroyoseco.org.

ⁱ “How Greenways Work, A Handbook on Ecology”
<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/greenways/NPSintroGrnwy.html>