

# Arroyo Seco Foundation

August 1, 2013

Laura O'Neill  
GPA Consulting  
231 California Street  
El Segundo, CA 90245

## **RE: Comments and Information Regarding the Arroyo Seco Pedestrian Bridge**

Dear Ms. O'Neill:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Arroyo Seco Pedestrian Bridge Construction Project. The Arroyo Seco Foundation is committed to creating public access and trail continuity all along the Arroyo Seco as it proceeds from the San Gabriel Mountains to downtown Los Angeles, so normally we would be pleased to support the construction of a pedestrian bridge in Pasadena's Lower Arroyo Seco as envisioned by this project. However this site is now being actively studied by the US Army Corps of Engineers as part of the Arroyo Seco Watershed Ecosystem Study for one of the most exciting stream restoration projects in the United States. (Feasibility Scoping Meeting Documentation, USACE, August, 2011 - [http://www.arroyoseco.org/corps/USACE\\_Arroyo\\_Seco\\_FSM.pdf](http://www.arroyoseco.org/corps/USACE_Arroyo_Seco_FSM.pdf)). The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works has recently urged USACE to accelerate the completion of their ecosystem study of the Arroyo and offered to provide advance funding to complete the project, so the site is under active review.

For many decades, the residents of Pasadena have viewed this stretch of the Arroyo Seco as a special site that should be protected for its natural character and where a living stream should be restored as much as possible, dating all the way back to renowned architect Myron Hunt's 1917 Arroyo Seco plan. In the early 1980s Takata and Associates produced the Lower Arroyo Seco Master Plan for the City of Pasadena, which discussed the potential for stream restoration in the area. In the mid-80s the famed environmental artists Newton and Helen Harrison put on an exhibit at Baxter Gallery at Caltech that proposed various innovative ways to restore the stream in this area. In 1988 graduate students from California Polytechnic University at Pomona prepared a groundbreaking and visionary "Master Plan for the Lower Arroyo Seco," which laid out a clear and inspiring vision for stream and habitat restoration in the area. The concept was again widely discussed and supported by the public in a series of public meetings that were part of the development of the Lower Arroyo Master Plan that was approved by the Pasadena City Council in 1997. There have also been several major studies in the last ten years that detailed the potential for stream restoration here.

The site being considered for this project, 400 feet north of the La Loma Bridge, is right in the middle of an area that ASF believes can and should be restored to a natural stream zone. A bridge is not inconsistent with stream restoration, but a bridge that would just span the flood channel would be a barrier and would send the message that Pasadena is not serious about stream restoration in the Lower Arroyo. The USACE Watershed Ecosystem Study and the implementation projects that will emanate from it present a long-awaited and historic opportunity to restore this stream in the Lower Arroyo. It would not be wise to proceed with a pedestrian bridge in this area at this time.

Sincerely,



Tim Brick  
Managing Director

570 W. Avenue 26 #450, Los Angeles, CA 90065  
PO Box 91622, Pasadena, CA 91109-1622