

RIVER RANGER PLAN

Phase 1 Report: Program Framework

Draft Report, June 13, 2018

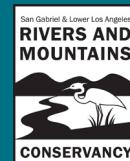




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1: INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

The Los Angeles River runs 51 miles through some of the most historically and culturally diverse communities in Southern California. However, it has literally and figuratively become separated from these communities over time due to rapid urbanization, increases in criminal activities, and flood issues. The perception of this River and its tributaries, as well as the physical character of its dynamic corridor, are transforming as jurisdictions and organizations come together to embrace the river as a valued and necessary asset. As the river gains public attention, the need for agencies to work together to address public safety, education, and resource improvements is becoming more urgent.

The development of the River Ranger Establishment Plan (River Ranger Plan) and Pilot Program as required under Assembly Bill 1558 (AB 1558) is an opportunity to develop a unified program that is responsive to the unique needs and conditions of the Rivers' diverse reaches. Furthermore, the development of the River Ranger Plan and a pilot program will catalyze long-term multi-jurisdictional collaboration and coordination as is necessary for the success of this program and other river and watershed programs.

This Report summarizes outcomes of the first phase of the River Ranger Plan development, and is intended to foster a collaborative, informed, and engaging planning process.

River Ranger Program Legislation

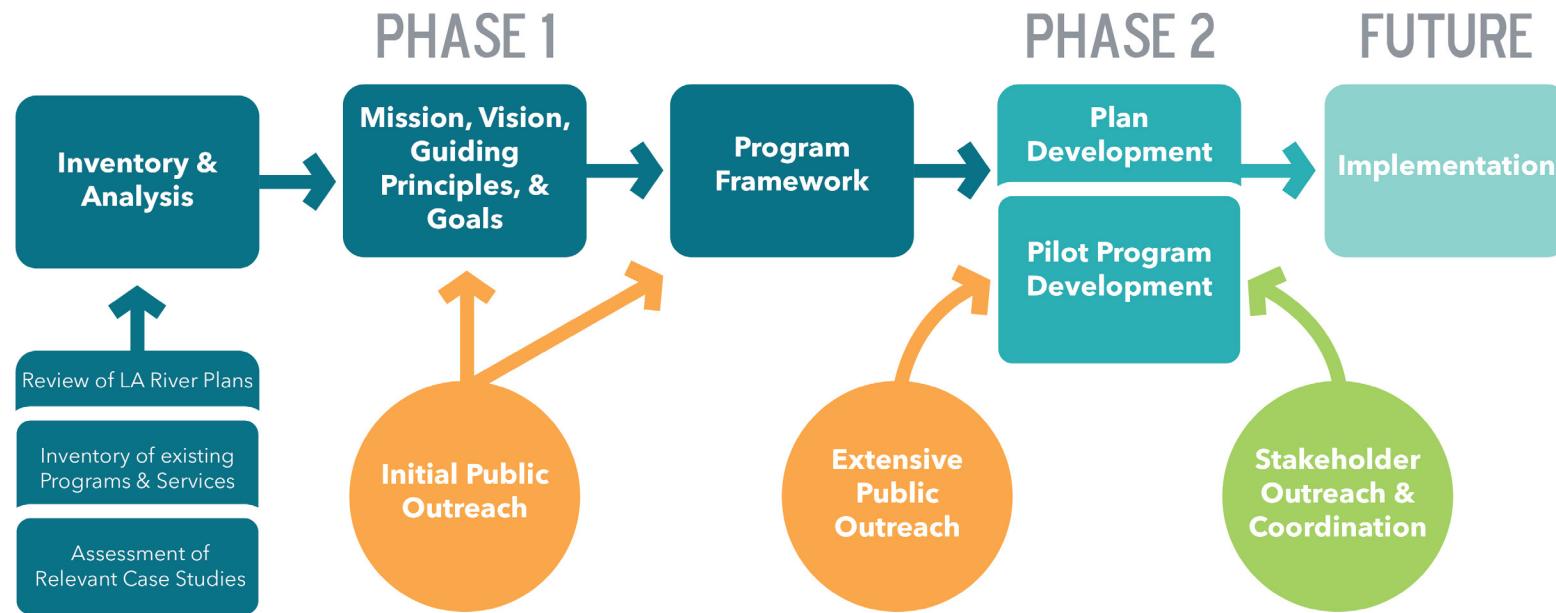
Assembly Bill 1558 Los Angeles River: River Ranger Program requires development of a program to provide a network of river rangers who assist the public at sites along the Los Angeles River and its tributaries. The bill was enacted in 2017 to address the limited contact with and responsibility for the river by communities, working in coordination with current revitalization programs to encourage engagement with the river as a welcoming community resource.

Under Assembly Bill 1558, the program is intended to:

- Establish a Los Angeles River identity
- Improve public safety for visitors
- Foster collaboration among those with jurisdiction over the river
- Protect parks, open space, and other public space
- Engage communities in the protection and preservation of the River and its resources
- Promote diversity and inclusion
- Promote equal access and equity among all communities along the River with regard to the development and placement of improvements along the river
- Monitor the physical conditions, environmental health, and development of green space along the River
- Coordinate the work of river rangers with programs and services



Figure 1.1 Planning Process Overview



River Ranger Planning Process

The River Ranger Plan is being developed by a community- and stakeholder driven process, intentionally designed to ensure that the Program serves community-identified needs and has the support of stakeholder agencies and organizations. The San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (conservancies) and their Joint Powers Authorities (JPAs) are leading the

planning process, with collaboration from the Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Conservation Corps, and the State Lands Commission in addition to other agencies as directed by AB 1558.

As illustrated in Figure 1.1, Planning Process Overview, the River Ranger Plan is being developed in two distinct phases. The first phase, the outcomes of which are presented in this Report, focuses on soliciting public input and stakeholder consensus on a framework for the River Ranger Program. The Framework includes

the mission, vision, guiding principles and goals for the Program, as well as the identification of the considerations and issues that the Plan will address.

The second phase will further develop the program components as well as governance structure and implementation and funding strategies. The second phase will provide opportunities for broad and in-depth community outreach to ensure the emergence of a community-driven program, as well as focused coordination with agency partners and other

stakeholders to ensure implementable strategies. Phase 2 will culminate the development and initiation of the LA River Ranger Pilot Program.

The development of the River Ranger Plan is guided by two advisory groups, the Steering Committee and the Stakeholder Committee.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee includes representatives from San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC), Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC), Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority (MRCA), Watershed Conservancy Authority (WCA), the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, California State Parks, Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon's office, and State Assembly Member Cristina Garcia's office. The Steering Committee guides development of the Plan, providing insight and direction at each milestone of the planning process.

Stakeholder Engagement

The Steering Committee formed a Stakeholder Committee that includes representatives from Federal, State, and local agencies, as well as 15 organizations participating along the River. Stakeholder Committee members are identified below.



Stakeholder Committee Members

- Cities of Bell, Bell Gardens, Burbank, Carson, Commerce, Compton, Cudahy, Downey, Glendale, Huntington Park, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Lynwood, Maywood, Montebello, Paramount, Pasadena, Pico Rivera, San Fernando, South Gate, South Pasadena, and Vernon.

Governmental Organizations

- LA Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) (JPA)
- California Conservation Corps
- State Lands Commission
- California State Parks
- US Army Corps of Engineers

Non-Governmental Organizations

- LA Conservation Corps (LACC)
- Conservation Corps of Long Beach (CCLB)
- Pacoima Beautiful
- Friends of the LA River (FOLAR)
- Mujeres de la Tierra (MDLT)
- From Lot to Spot (FLTS)
- LA County Bike Coalition
- River LA
- Tree People
- North East Trees
- Arroyo Seco Foundation
- East Yards Communities for Environmental Justice



During Phase 1, the Stakeholder Committee guided the overall development of the program framework to ensure it meet the needs of jurisdictions along the River, supported public engagement efforts, and assisted with the inventory of existing services and programs.

Committee members participated in four meetings to review and provide feedback on program development. The first two meetings provided background and common understanding of the Program legislation and allowed stakeholders to explore key issues and opportunities. During the third meeting, Stakeholder Committee participants formed small groups to collaborate on the draft program mission statement, vision statement, and goals and guiding principles. The final meeting conducted during Phase 1 is intended to present the Draft Phase 1 Report, solicit input on contents of the River Ranger Plan, and identify issues, opportunities, and implementation strategies to be explored.

Stakeholders also participated in a Services and Programs Inventory Survey through which they documented their current work along the River. Information gathered on services and programs is summarized in Chapter 3.

Public Outreach and Engagement

The River Ranger Program is intended to meet community needs, and thus public outreach and engagement is critical to success of the planning process.

The purpose of outreach conducted in Phase 1 was to provide information on the River Ranger program, to gain an understanding of how the program could help meet community needs, and to build interest for more extensive engagement opportunities that will be offered during Phase 2.

Outreach in Phase 1 was supported by twelve non-governmental organizations (NGOs), identified below. Together, these organizations solicited public input at community events, and utilized e-blasts, newsletter updates, and social media posts to provide information on the plan development and encourage participation in the online survey. The survey was available in English and Spanish and as a hard-copy survey, and all Stakeholders were asked to distribute the link to their distribution lists and post the link on their websites. Hard copy surveys were also available

at events and through NGO partners; completed hard copy surveys were entered into the online survey and analyzed with online submissions.

Outreach in Phase 2 will incorporate additional strategies to ensure broad participation and extensive engagement.

PHASE 1 OUTREACH: WHO PARTICIPATED?

Who participated?

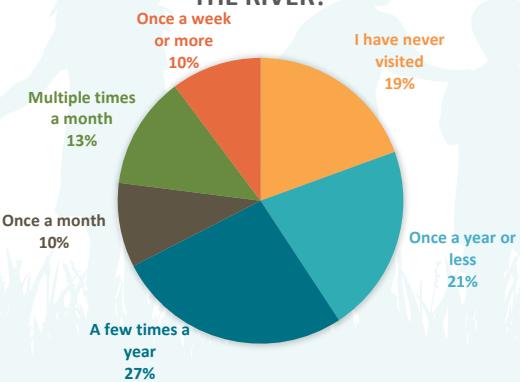
Figure 1.2, Phase 1 Community Outreach Events and Survey Participation, identifies events where community input was solicited through tabling with interactive posters, and summarizes the geographic distribution of respondents in the online survey. Through this process, over 1,220 were completed and additional input was provided through the interactive poster activities. Figure 1-2 also describes age distribution of participants and how often participants visit the River. Most of the respondents who have never visited the river are under 18 years old. As input received from the interactive posters is being gathered, this Report focuses on outcomes of the online survey. Outcomes of the interactive poster activities will be incorporated into the Final Report and inform Plan Development in Phase 2.

NGO Outreach Partners

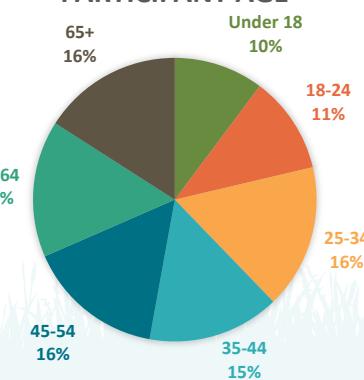
- Pacoima Beautiful
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- Tree People
- FOLAR
- North East Trees
- River LA
- LA Conservation Corps
- Arroyo Seco Foundation
- East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice



HOW OFTEN DO PARTICIPANTS VISIT THE RIVER?



PARTICIPANT AGE



WHAT DO YOU DO AT THE RIVER?

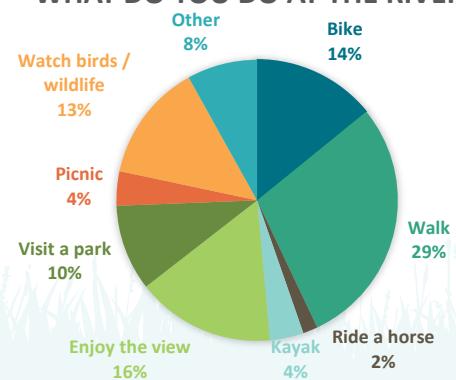
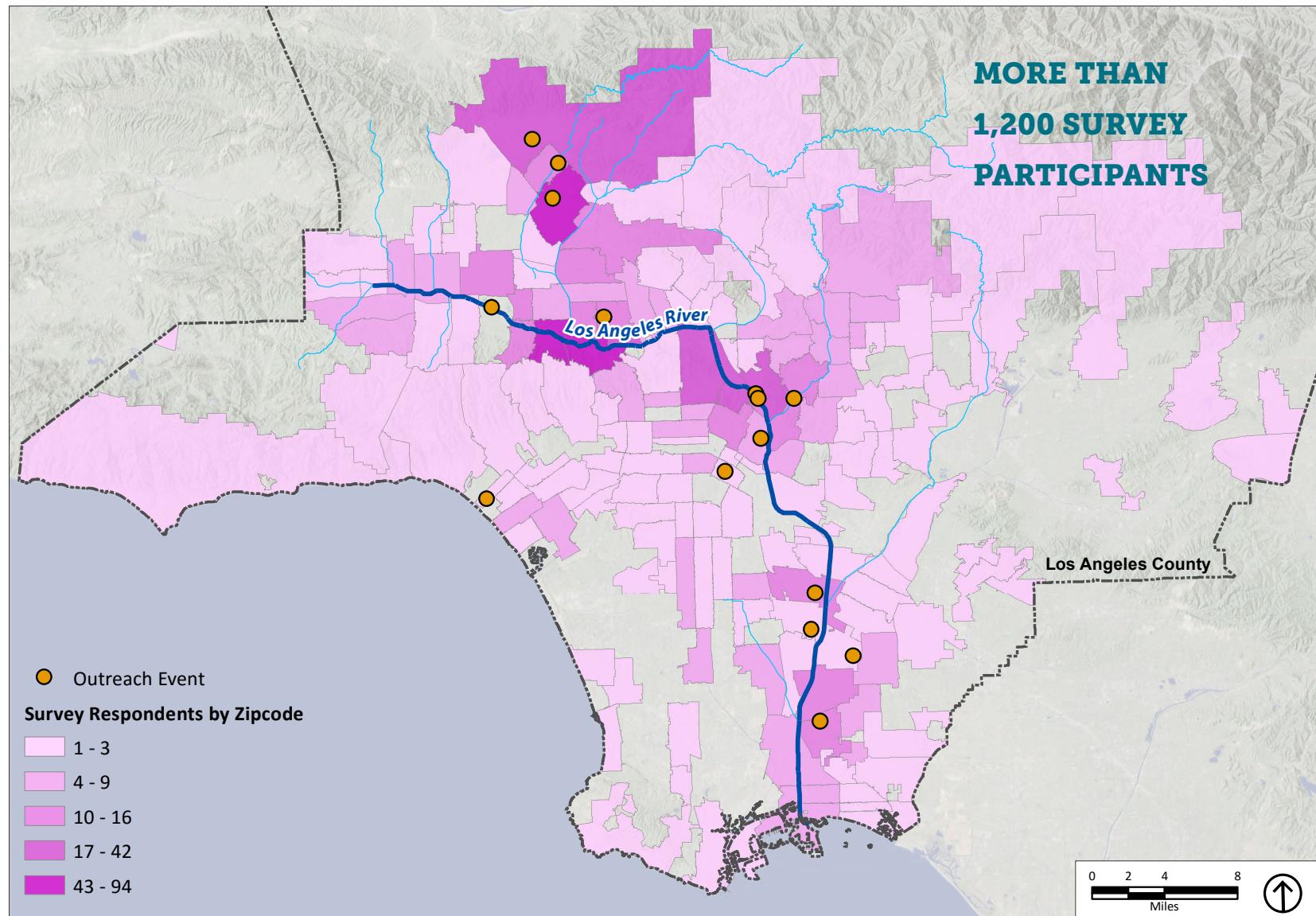




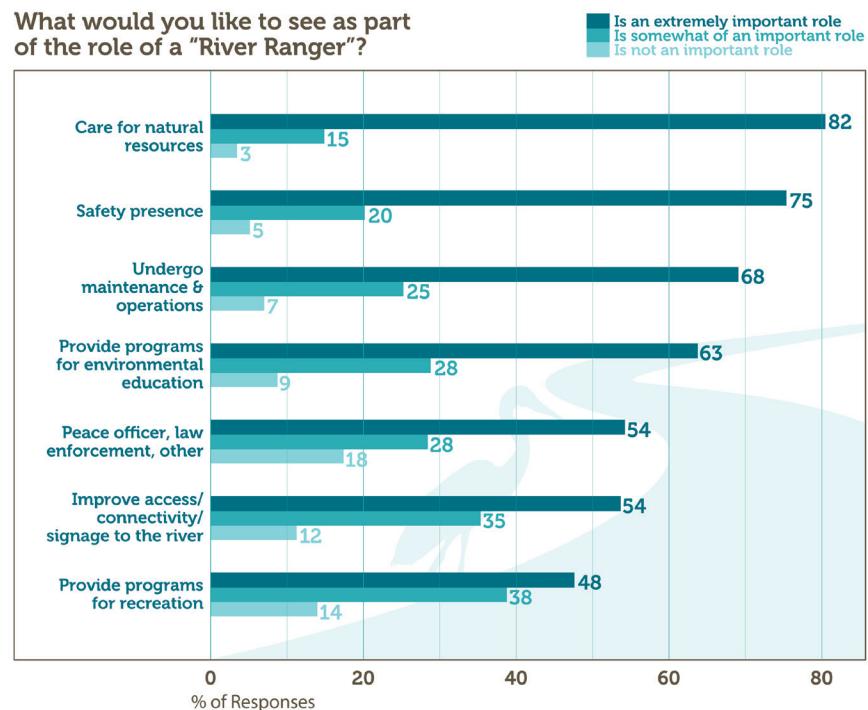
Fig 1.2 Phase 1 Community Outreach Events and Survey Participation



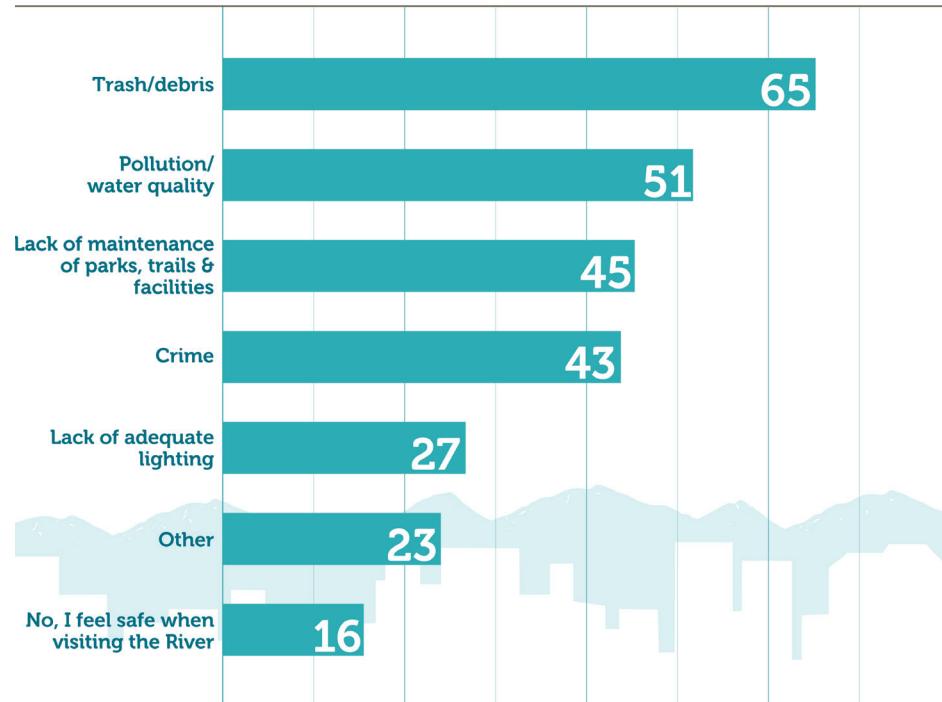
PHASE 1 OUTREACH: WHAT DID THE PUBLIC SAY?

What did participants say?

The online survey and interactive posters provided at events asked participants to rate the importance of specific roles of a River Ranger, to select topics they would like more information on, and to provide input on safety concerns when visiting the River. Participants were invited to provide written comments and to provide an e-mail address if they were interested in future volunteer or job opportunities in coordination with the program. Outcomes of the online survey are summarized below and in the following pages, and Appendix A provides more detailed results from the survey and poster activity.



Do you have any safety concerns when visiting the River?

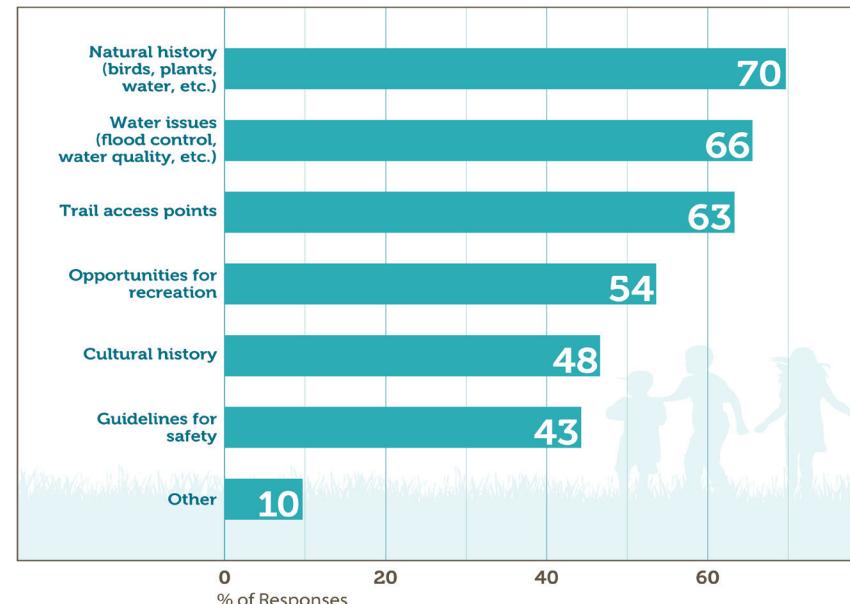


Highlights from the initial analysis of survey results are summarized below, and further described in Chapter 4 as they related to specific topic areas:

- All Ranger roles are important, yet greatest importance was assigned to caring for natural resources, providing a safety presence, and maintenance and operations.
- Approximately 16% said they feel safe when visiting the River; the remaining 84% of participants identified safety concerns associated with the River.
- Trash and debris was identified by 65% of all respondents as a safety concern, emerging as the leading concern. Of participants that have never visited the river, only approximately 50% were most concerned about trash/debris. Pollution and water quality, lack of maintenance, and crime were also identified as concerns by many respondents.
- Safety presence was favored over law enforcement as a ranger role, with approximately 75% and 54% identifying these as extremely important roles, respectively.

- Of the 1,172 open ended responses submitted regarding safety concerns:
 - 126 reference homeless or transient populations along the River with comments regarding actual or perceived safety concerns. Participants indicated the need for Rangers to take a role in homeless outreach along the River.
 - 24 responses indicated drug use as a safety concern when visiting the River.
- Respondents were interested in learning more about many River topics, with highest interest being identified for natural history, water issues, trail access points, and opportunities for recreation.
- English and Spanish were the languages most wanting representation along the River.
- Approximately 55% of respondents were interested in future employment and/or volunteer opportunities.

What Los Angeles River topics would you like to know more about?





How to use the Phase 1 Report

As discussed above, the Phase 1 Report is intended to provide a foundation for further development of Plan as a collaborative, informed, and engaging process. The document will provide a resource for Stakeholders and community members, and is organized into four chapters:

- 1. Introduction:** Provides an overview of the purpose and planning process for the River Ranger Plan.
- 2. Envisioning the River Ranger Program:** Presents Draft Mission, Vision, Guiding Principle and Goal statements that emerged from the planning process.
- 3. Los Angeles River Primer:** Provides an overview of ownership and management of the Los Angeles River, identifies agencies and organizations that provide services and programs along the River, and summarizes key Los Angeles River planning documents.
- 4. Program Framework:** The Framework is intended as a spring board for Phase 2 of the planning process. This chapter presents the working draft outline for the River Ranger Plan as it will be developed in Phase 2, and distills findings and considerations as they relate to each of the Guiding Principles.



2: ENVISIONING THE RIVER RANGER PROGRAM



BUILDING BLOCKS FOR A COMMUNITY-SERVING RIVER RANGER PROGRAM

This chapter contains draft mission, vision, guiding principle and goal statements for the LA River Ranger Program. These statements emerged from a collaborative process with Stakeholders and were informed by outcomes of public outreach conducted in Phase 1 of the River Ranger Plan planning process. Together, these statements are intended to guide the development and implementation of the River Ranger Program. Draft statements may be further refined in Phase 2 based on additional input and analysis.



MISSION

What the River Ranger Program is and does...

The mission of the River Ranger Program is to partner with communities and local agencies to establish a program to promote access, safety, maintenance, resource protection, recreation, education, volunteer and work opportunities, and other community benefits associated with a revitalized LA River and tributaries.

VISION

How the River Ranger Program and a revitalized river will impact communities in the future...

The vision is for a revitalized LA River and tributaries with improved access, a safe environment, and new opportunities to enjoy this open space resource. The River Ranger Program is integrated with local agencies and communities to provide seamless programs, services, and care over the river. There is a new appreciation for the river, and residents and businesses support the River Ranger Program and its activities. Local youth and volunteers participate in internships, and grow into the future stewards of the river and tributaries.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1

Public Safety

All designated access points, trails, parks and open spaces along the Los Angeles River should be safe for visitors to enjoy.

Goals

- Improve public safety for visitors (AB1558)
- Protect parks, open space, and other public space (AB1558)
- Develop standards for providing rules and regulations as well as preventative warnings and education to existing and potential River visitors
- Ensure residents and visitors have information needed to contact appropriate public safety responders (maintenance, law enforcement, swift water rescue, and emergency services)
- Facilitate the incorporation of safety measures along pathways and access points, such as adequate lighting, wayfinding signage, and emergency response call beacons
- Reduce encampments from the River corridor through close collaboration with Los Angeles County Homeless Support Services



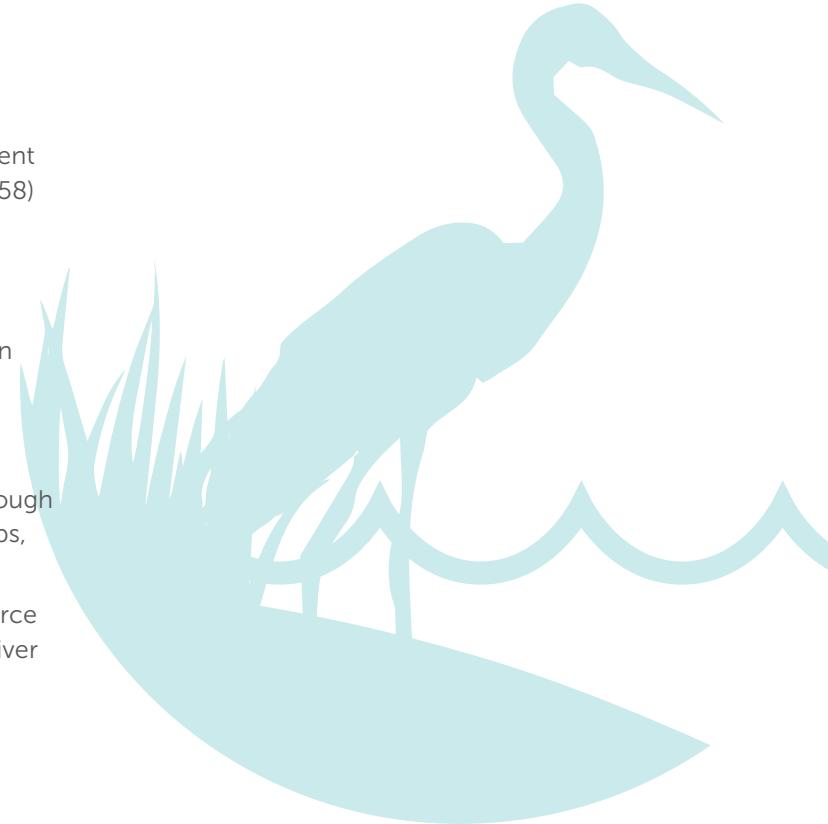
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2

Maintenance and Resource Management

Natural, cultural and built resources along the Los Angeles River provide multiple environmental and community benefits; these resources should be protected, maintained, enhanced, and interpreted for the public to ensure that the River is a safe and enjoyable place to visit.

Goals

-  Monitor the physical conditions, environmental health, and development of green space along the River (AB1558)
-  Maintain cleanliness and safety of resources and facilities (trails, parks, restrooms, etc.)
- Engage communities in the protection and preservation of the River and its resources (AB1558)
- Support existing and developing protection and restoration efforts through staff and volunteer efforts, partnerships, and programming
- Create a consistent standard of resource and facility management along the River





GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3

Outreach

All visitors should be encouraged to utilize the River, and provided information and resources to ensure safe and resource-sensitive use.

Goals

-  Educate the public regarding where and how to safely experience the River corridor
-  Actively engage with homeless populations as a trusted community presence; provide services, supplies, and information on available services and resources; connect homeless to Los Angeles County Homeless Support Services
-  Engage visitors in defining the River's identity as a community resource, and the role of the community River caretakers
-  Observe use of the river and adjacent trails, parks, and open space to proactively identify and respond to emerging issues and opportunities



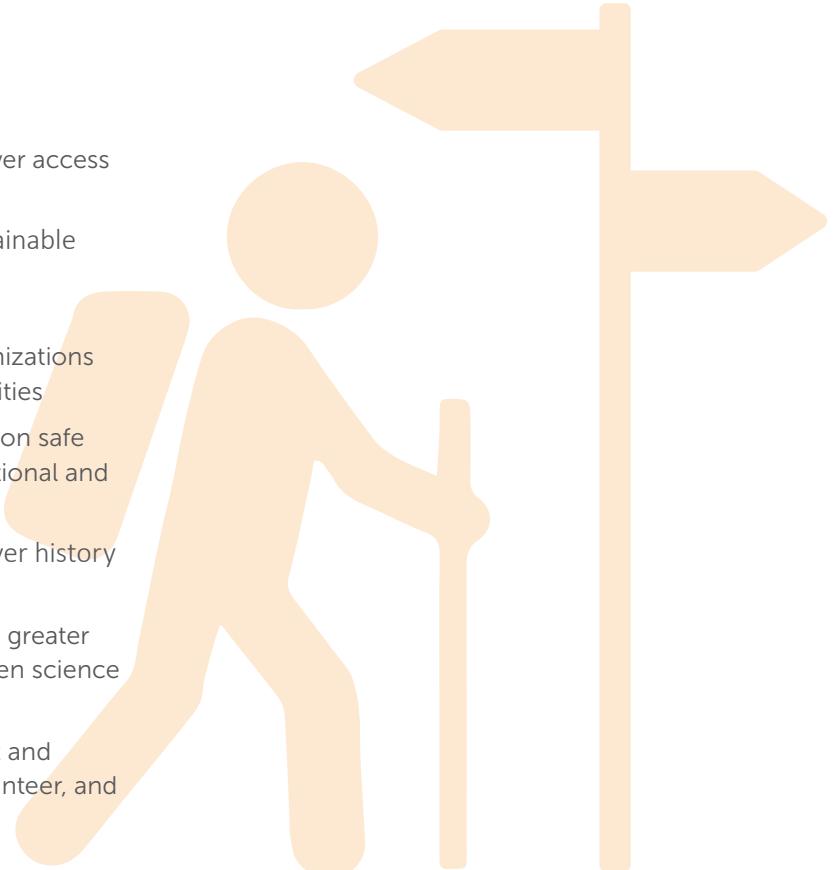
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4

Recreation, Interpretation and Education Programs

The Los Angeles River should be an outdoor classroom that provides resources and experiences that build understanding and inspire appreciation of the river's ecology, history, and community benefits; as well as an experiential landscape that offers active and passive recreational opportunities that respond to the varying physical conditions along the River.

Goals

-  Improve public awareness of River access and recreational opportunities
-  Provide and promote safe, sustainable recreation opportunities
-  Collaborate with local agencies, businesses and non-profit organizations to increase recreation opportunities
-  Provide and facilitate education on safe river corridor access and recreational and educational opportunities
-  Improve public knowledge of river history and ecology
-  Engage the public in developing greater understanding of the River (citizen science and similar efforts)
-  Provide workforce development and employment opportunities, volunteer, and youth education programs





GUIDING PRINCIPLE 5

Administration and Coordination

Coordination and collaboration among agencies with jurisdiction over the river, organizations that provide services and programs, and members of the public is essential to providing dependable services that enhance the river as a natural and community resource. The River Ranger Program will act as a central conduit to bring together all parties involved.

Goals

- Coordinate the work of river rangers with programs and services (AB1558)
- Foster collaboration among those with jurisdiction over the river (AB1558)
- Promote equal access and equity among all communities along the River with regard to the development and placement of improvements along the river (AB1558)
- Develop adequate funding strategies, partnerships, and sponsorship opportunities to ensure program sustainability
- Promote diversity and inclusion (AB1558)
- Offer employment opportunities with local hire as a focus, as well as creation of volunteer opportunities
- Solicit and address visitor input on concerns, issues, and opportunities





3: LOS ANGELES RIVER PRIMER



LOS ANGELES RIVER PRIMER

This Chapter provides a foundation from which to understand the Los Angeles River with consideration to management, maintenance, and the provision of services and programs. Components of this chapter include an overview of existing ownership and maintenance responsibilities, identification of key agencies and organizations operating along the River, and a brief summary of planning documents focused on the Los Angeles River and its tributaries. Finally, this chapter highlights the Ranger program operated by the Mountains Conservation Authority as an existing program that provides many of the services envisioned for the River Ranger program.

Who owns and maintains the River?

Numerous public and private entities and individuals together hold ownership to the lands that support the Los Angeles River and its tributaries, making coordination of river-wide efforts challenging. As shown in Figure 3.1, Ownership, entities that own portions of the Los Angeles River corridors and adjacent lands include the City of LA, LA County Flood Control District, LA County, LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the State of California, federal agencies, private owners.

Despite the complexity of ownership, there are just two dominant entities responsible for providing channel maintenance within the river right-of-way: (1) the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD), operated by the Department of Public Works, and (2) and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Portions of the channel maintained by each entity are identified in Figure 3.2, Maintenance Responsibility. LACFCD owns, operates, and maintains a variety of flood risk management and water conservation infrastructure, including over 25 miles of the LA River.

Any project or activity within or affecting the River right-of-way, facilities, or lands under LACFCD jurisdiction must be issued Flood

Permits by LACFCD. Projects in the City of Los Angeles are also reviewed by the Los Angeles River Cooperation Committee. The Los Angeles River Cooperation Committee is a joint working group with representatives from LACFCD, City of LA, and US Army Corps of Engineers.

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Los Angeles District is responsible for maintaining any channel that they originally constructed, including the Sepulveda Flood Control Basin and the stretch between Lankershim Boulevard and Washington Boulevard. USACE performs similar maintenance duties, with a focus on habitat enhancement and restoration to support channel integrity, and has authority to issue permits for projects on lands under their jurisdictions.

Public lands adjacent to the river channel, including trails, parks and open space, are typically maintained by the owner, which includes Park and Public Work Departments as well as non-governmental organizations. Maintenance of parks, trails and open space facilities is further discussed in Chapter 4.

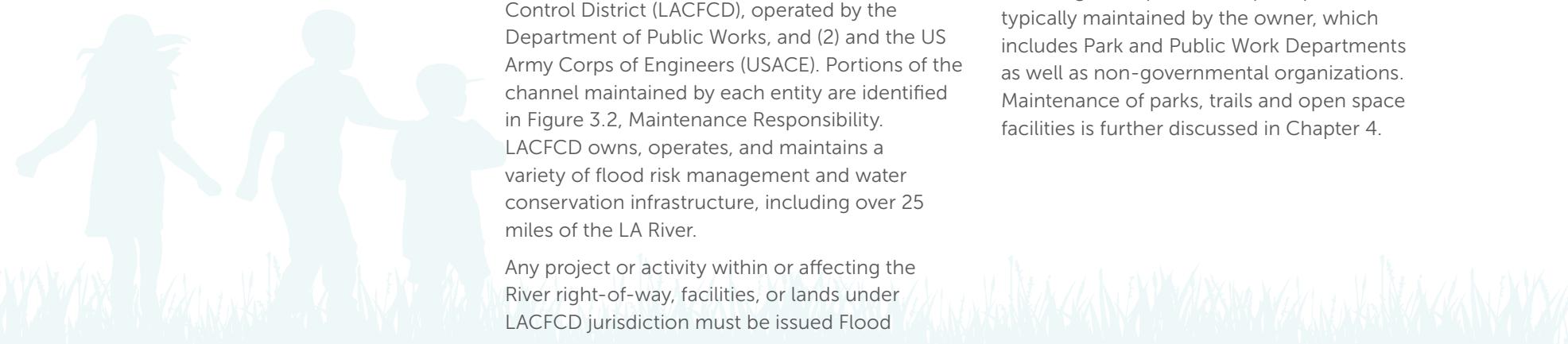
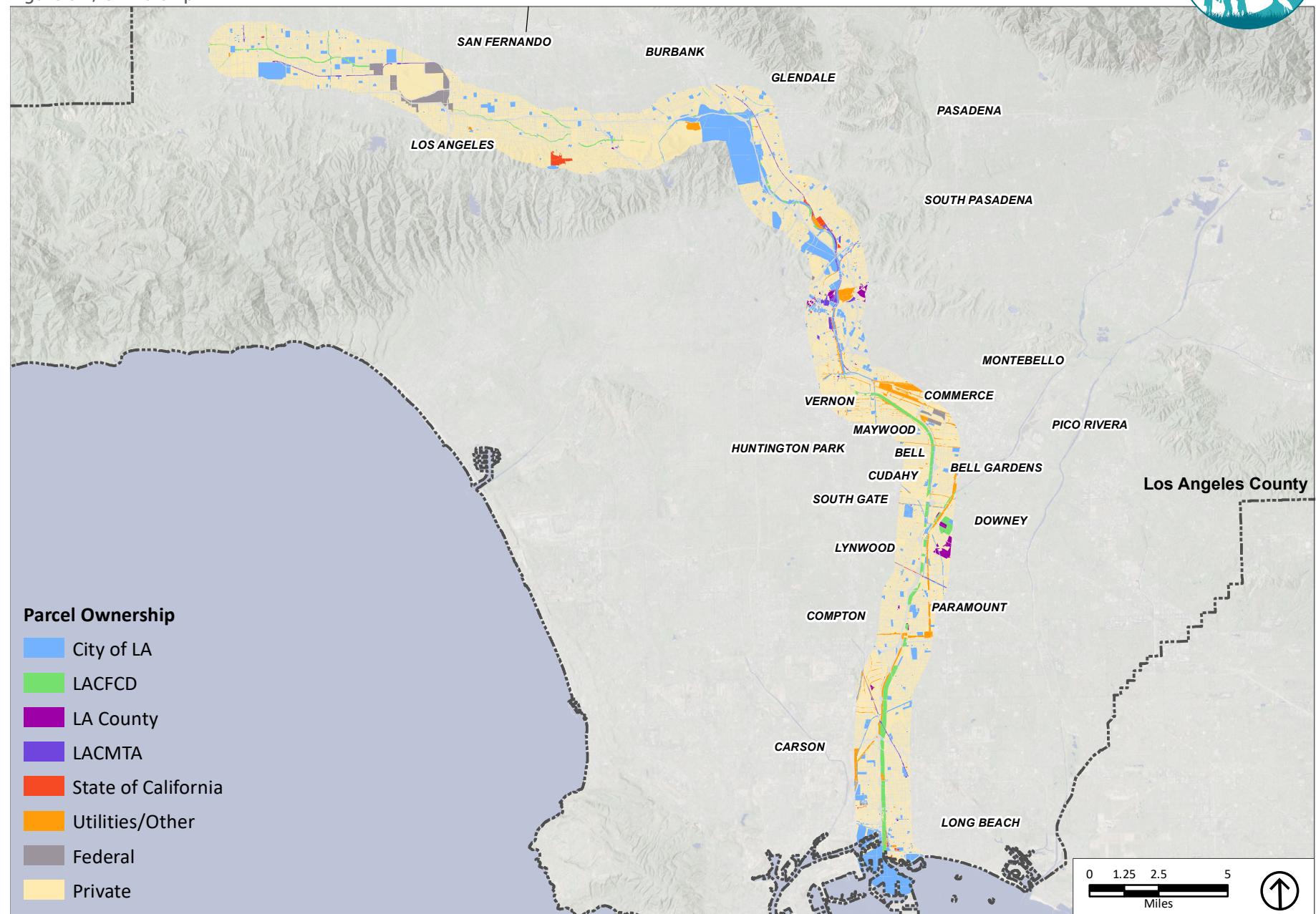
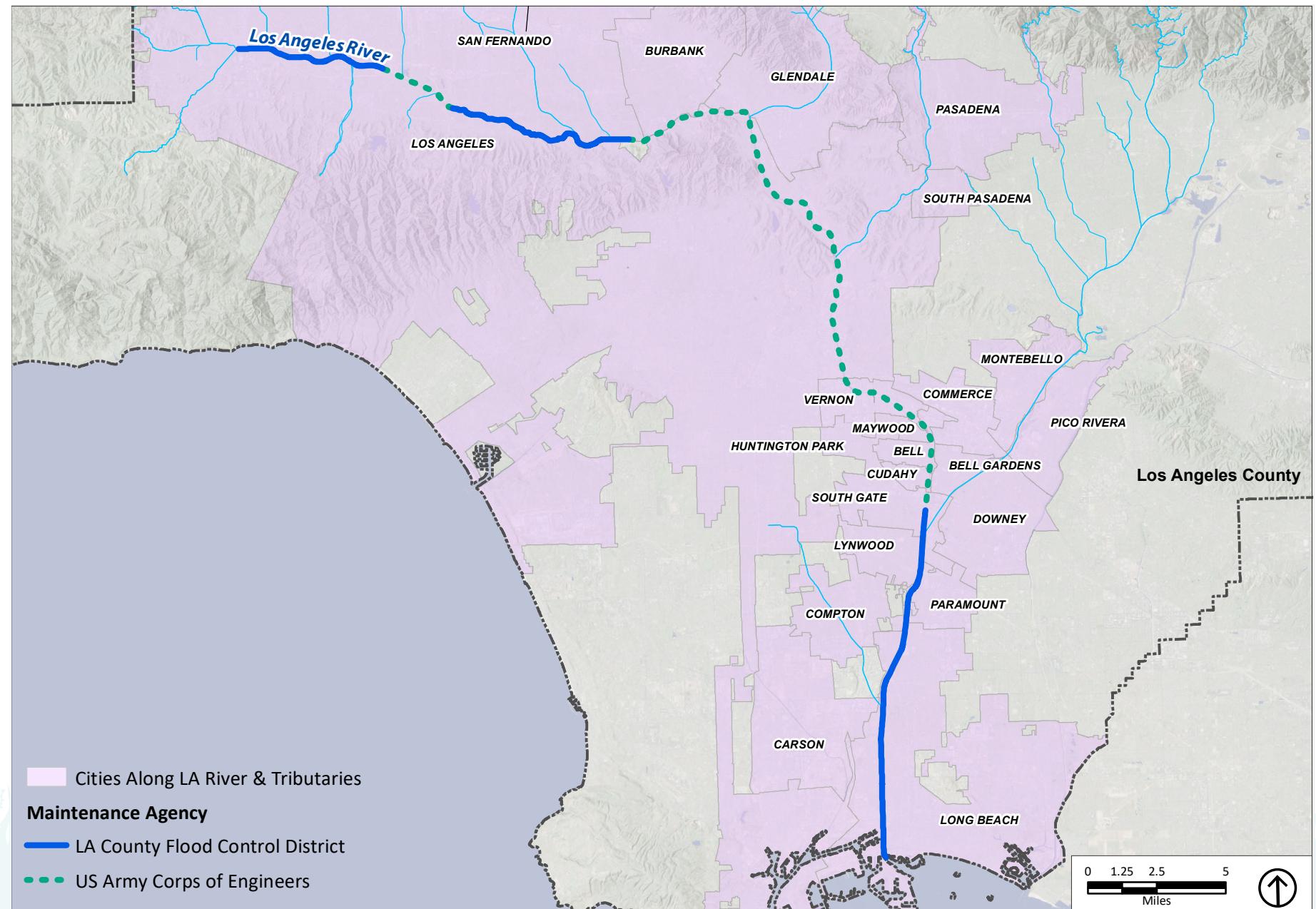


Figure 3.1, Ownership



CHAPTER 3: LOS ANGELES RIVER PRIMER

Figure 3.2, Maintenance Responsibility





OVERVIEW OF AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED IN RIVER MANAGEMENT AND SERVICE PROVISION

Countless entities provide public safety services, maintenance, education programs, recreational opportunities, and even homeless services in and along the channel. This section highlights the agencies that contribute to the management of the Los Angeles River and adjacent public space, as well as agencies and organizations that provide river-related programs and services. Each entity's role and activities are described in the following pages, and icons indicate the type of services provided. Service types are categorized as described to the right.



Maintenance and Resource Management

Services that focus on maintaining and enhancing the condition of natural resources as well as public access facilities (trails, parks, signage, etc.). This includes but is not limited to landscaping, litter control, trail building, facilities repair, and sediment removal, invasive species removal, and vegetation replanting.



Recreational and Educational Programs

Recreational, educational, and interpretive programs that connect the general public with the Los Angeles River. Programs are supported by public parks, open space, trails, and access amenities, and include but are not limited to curriculum, signage, and guided programs.



Public Safety

Services and programs focused on river safety, law enforcement, patrol, and emergency response.



Outreach and Engagement

Programs and services that focus on ensuring that visitors and potential visitors have adequate resources to safely engage with the River. Outreach includes connecting homeless individuals with services and resources.

FEDERAL AND STATE

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY



The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) was established by state legislation in 1980 and is dedicated to preserving landscapes and natural habitats in Southern California through direct action, alliances, partnerships, and JPAs. Their mission is to create a network of urban and rural parks, open space, trails, and wildlife habitats that are publicly accessible through strategic purchases, restoration, and preservation. Since its establishment, the Conservancy has preserved over 73,000 acres of natural and urban parkland. SMMC's jurisdictional boundaries are identified in Figure 3.3.

MOUNTAINS RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY



MRCA manages public parklands and provides natural resource management expertise, regional planning services, ranger services, and youth education programs. It is a JPA between the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, a state agency, and the Conejo Recreation and Park District and the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. MRCA Rangers provide a variety of public safety and maintenance services on parklands owned or managed by SMMC, including LA River Recreation Zones when the channel is open during the summer.

SAN GABRIEL AND LOWER LOS ANGELES RIVERS AND MOUNTAIN CONSERVANCY



The San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers Mountains Conservancy (RMC) was established by state legislation in 1999 and is dedicated to open space preservation, wildlife habitat restoration, and watershed improvements. Their jurisdiction covers eastern LA County and western Orange County, and also includes a small portion of the Santa Clara River and Santa Ana River, shown in Figure 3.3.

They have developed watershed management plans, green vision plans, and regional bikeway feasibility studies to promote recreational open space and watershed health. The RMC chaired the Working Group that developed the Lower LA River Revitalization Plan, which focused on opportunities to improve river health and community members' quality of life.

WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY



The Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) is a JPA between the RMC and LACFCP dedicated to watershed enhancement and water conservation in the San Gabriel and Lower LA Rivers Watershed. They own and manage properties along major urban rivers in LA County, including Parque dos Rios along the LA River and Duck Farm Park along the San Gabriel River.

WCA partners with local and regional entities to implement watershed improvement plans and invest in open space, parks, trails, and greenways. WCA builds and maintains lands to restore ecological functioning and facilitate recreation activities such as hiking, biking, horseback riding, and camping. They also provide interpretation and education services, including a Junior Ranger Program.



Figure 3.3, Jurisdictional Boundaries

PLACEHOLDER

FEDERAL AND STATE (CONTINUED)

US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, LOS ANGELES DISTRICT



The US Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District (USACE) is the federal entity charged with enforcing flood protection regulations and standards in the channel and controlling dams under federal ownership. As discussed above, USACE is responsible for maintaining 22.5 miles of the LA River Flood Control Channel running through the County. Maintenance duties include debris removal, channel repairs, vegetation management, pedestrian path upkeep, and habitat restoration. The primary ecological responsibilities of the USACE are to remove invasive vegetation and debris from the channel, most recently in the area adjacent to Elysian Valley between Fletcher Drive and Riverside Drive.

THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION



The California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) manages 280 park units in the State. Their mission is to preserve ecological diversity, protect natural and cultural resources, and create opportunities for outdoor recreation. Although California State Parks does not own or manage any properties along the LA River or its tributaries, there are several State Parks in the Los Angeles Region and the agency coordinates and collaborates with agencies and organizations that operate along the River. While the State Park Peace Officers do not operate within the Los Angeles River, this program has the potential to coordinate with and/or serve as a model for River Rangers. State Park Peace Officers offer law enforcement, visitor services, and interpretation services to all state parks.

STATE LANDS COMMISSION



The State Lands Commission (SLC) manages over four million acres of tidal lands and the beds of navigable rivers, streams, lake, and bays in California. They are responsible for protecting navigable waterways and the coastline, as well as preserving habitat for wildlife, native vegetation, and important biological communities. While most SLC lands and active leases in LA County are along the coast and not along the River, AB1558 identifies the agency as a potential collaborator for the River Ranger Program due its role in the region and State.



LOS ANGELES COUNTY

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT



The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department provides law enforcement services to 42 cities, 130 unincorporated communities, and various other facilities within the County. They are responsible for crime detection and prevention. The Sheriff currently patrols seven of the 22 stakeholder cities—Carson, Commerce, Compton, Cudahy, Lynwood, Paramount, and Pico Rivera. The Park Bureau of the LA County Sheriff's Department polices 177 County parks, golf courses, and special event venues throughout the County, as well as over 210 miles of regional, multi-use County trails.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT



The Swift Water Rescue Division of the Los Angeles Fire County Department is responsible for performing water rescues during and after extreme rainfall events. Swift Water Rescue Teams are strategically located in LA County fire stations and assist the Department's Urban Search and Rescue and Lifeguard Divisions. They service most cities in the County and all stretches of the LA River in their jurisdiction, excluding the city of Los Angeles.¹

¹ LAFD. <https://www.fire.lacounty.gov/portfolio/swiftwater-operations/>. Accessed 7 May 2018.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS



The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (DPW) is responsible for planning and operational activities of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD). Their jurisdiction runs from Owensmouth Ave to above the Sepulveda Flood Control Basin then resumes downstream after the basin to Lankershim Blvd. LACFCD also maintains the LA River downstream of Southern Avenue to the outlet at Long Beach Harbor. DPW performs general maintenance of the river right of way, landscaping, and irrigation and fencing repairs. It also maintains most stormdrain outfalls in the county and administers permits for channel modifications. Additionally, they assist with the removal of homeless encampments following due process.^{2,3} The department's Bikeways Unit plans and develops bikeway projects in the county.

² Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan. Accessed 7 May 2018.

³ DPW. <https://dpw.lacounty.gov/LACFCD/web/>. Accessed 7 May 2018.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY (CONTINUED)

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION



The Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) is responsible for over 63,000 acres of parks and open space in LA County, including 210 miles of regional, multi-use County trails. DPR provides landscaping and maintenance services, which include tree trimming and removal, trail building and maintenance, turf management, litter removal, and gardening. Various private entities provide additional landscape maintenance services to County parks and facilities through contracts and offer amenities such as bicycle and boat rentals, pools, recreational vehicle parks, and equestrian rentals. Grants obtained by the Regional Park and Open Space District have helped fund projects such as the creation of new walking and hiking trails, graffiti removal, and the restoration of rivers and streams in the county.



CITY OF LOS ANGELES

POLICE DEPARTMENT



The City of Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) is responsible for law enforcement, crime prevention, and safety operations in the city, which is divided into four bureaus: Valley Bureau, West Bureau, Central Bureau, and South Bureau. LAPD commonly responds to calls for harassment, vandalism, homeless issues, and criminal activity along the river. All after hours calls directed to the City of LA Park Rangers are transferred to LAPD.

FIRE DEPARTMENT



The City of Los Angeles Fire Department employs a Swift Water Rescue Team that is dispatched to floods or situations where people or animals are trapped in rushing water. It services the City of LA, responding to most calls along the LA River and providing assistance to the LA County Fire Department as necessary. They are equipped with boats, floats, and jet skis along with other gear to perform human and animal rescues.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS



The City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works is responsible for maintenance of parks and parcels along the river corridor and administers permits for projects involving the River through the LACFCD. They were involved in the creation of the Lower Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan and provided recommendations for design, management, and improvements to the social, ecological, and economic communities along the corridor.⁴

⁴ DPW. <http://dpw.lacity.org/>. Accessed 7 May 2018.

CITY OF LOS ANGELES (CONTINUED)

DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS



The City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks maintains 15,600 acres of parks and open space in the City of Los Angeles, including the pocket parks and recreation facilities along the river corridor. DRP Park Rangers are sworn, armed peace officers who provide emergency services, law enforcement, and wildland firefighting to Griffith Park, Runyon Canyon, Elysian Park, Hansen Dam, Debs Parks, and Harbor Regional Recreation Area. Additionally, the division employs non-peace officers and specialized Equestrian Mounted Units, Bicycle Units, and Fire Suppression Units. Rangers are responsible for leading interpretive education programs at park facilities and conducting nature hikes for school children.⁵ Other DRP employees work with arborists employed by the Department of Water and Power to maintain trees along streets, in City parks, and on public grounds.

⁵ DRP. <https://www.laparks.org/department/who-we-are>. Accessed 7 May 2018.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



The City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation services the entire river corridor that runs through the City of LA.⁶ They are responsible for the design and construction of bike paths along the river and improving access to transportation and transit services in surrounding neighborhoods.

⁶ DOT. <http://ladot.lacity.org/what-we-do>. Accessed 7 May 2018.

DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER



The City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) is the major water utility provider in the City of LA, dedicated to providing water in a safe, equitable, and environmentally responsible manner. The LADWP owns some parks and open spaces along the river corridor and assists the LACFCD with operations and maintenance of adjacent lands and soft-bottom channel in the County. They set requirements for new construction and improvements to areas along the channel to protect water and power infrastructure.



JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY

LOS ANGELES HOMELESS SERVICES AUTHORITY



The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) is a joint powers authority created between the City and County of Los Angeles to address the needs of unsheltered homeless residents. LAHSA administers funding, predominantly from Measure H and other LA County sources, to service providers to help single adults, youth, and families access services and find permanent housing. The Homeless Outreach Partnership Endeavor (HOPE) Project was established in 2015 between LAHSA, the Los Angeles Department of Sanitation, and the Los Angeles Police Department to increase access to food, shelter, short term housing, medical services, and mental health resources. They commonly work with City and County Public Works Departments to address homeless encampments along the river.

OTHER CITIES



All cities along the River and its tributaries offer some level of services and programs. Appendix B, LA River Program and Services Matrix, provides a breakdown of the services and programs provided by each City based on information shared during the Phase 1 Planning Process, and an overview of city services is provided below.

Cities that do not have contracts with LASD rely on their own police departments to provide law enforcement and public safety services.

Many Cities have their own fire departments that assist with emergency response in the city.

Some Cities provide maintenance, recreation, and education services through their Parks and Recreation or Public Works programs. For example, the Pasadena Department of Public Works provides public safety and maintenance as part of their regular park and street maintenance duties, as well periodic native vegetation restoration through the Capital Projects program. Most of their work focuses on Arroyo Seco, the specific tributary of the LA River that runs through their jurisdiction.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

There are many non-governmental organizations working along the river providing maintenance, restoration, and education services. The list includes, but is not limited to the organizations highlighted to the right.

Other non-governmental organizations providing River-related services include but are not limited to the Arroyo Seco Foundation, Mujeres de la Tierra, and The Nature Conservancy.

TREE PEOPLE



Tree People is a grassroots organization seeking to improve climate resiliency and environmental conditions in the City of LA by increasing canopy cover. They organize clean up days in parks near the river and partner with Friends of the Los Angeles River (FOLAR) and other community groups to provide educational programming on watershed health. Although they don't offer recreational programs, they participate in other promotional events to encourage public interaction with the river.

FRIENDS OF THE LOS ANGELES RIVER



Friends of the Los Angeles River (FOLAR) is a non-governmental organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the natural conditions and cultural heritage of the LA River and promoting river stewardship through restoration activities, educational programs, and planning procedures. They are one of the oldest grassroots organizations devoted to the LA River, offering tours and organizing an annual river clean up known as La Gran Limpieza.

LOS ANGELES CONSERVATION CORPS



The LA Conservation Corps (LACC) provides at-risk and school-aged youth with job training opportunities, education, and work experience on conservation and service projects that benefit the community. Through a partnership with the City of LA's Community Development Department and Department of Public Works, they provide maintenance and landscaping services to restore the river channel, including litter and graffiti removal, vegetation management.



RELEVANT PLANS

In the last several decades there have been numerous efforts to envision and enhance the LA River, many resulting in planning documents that have helped fuel changing perception of the River. The concept of the LA River Ranger Program has emerged from these efforts, and the development and implementation of the Program has the potential to support their realization. A summary of existing master plans focusing on the LA River is provided in the following pages and summarized in Figure 3.4. A more detailed summary of each of the plans is provided in Appendix C. Key themes from these relevant plans are highlighted in Chapter 4.

In addition to these LA River-focused Plans, the Emerald Necklace Feasibility and Implementation Plan addresses opportunities along the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel Rivers. This Plan may also inform River Ranger Plan development, and is included in Figure 3.4.

LA COUNTY RIVER MASTER PLAN (1996)

Lead Agency: LA County Department of Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Regional Planning

This master plan promotes the enhancement of aesthetic, recreational, flood control, and environmental values through physical improvements and greater coordination between relevant agencies and the public. It encourages developing community pride in the River through educational programs led by city parks departments and community organizations.

To view this Plan: <http://ladpw.org/wmd/watershed/la/larmp/>

LA RIVER REVITALIZATION MASTER PLAN (2007)

Lead Agency: City of LA Department of Public Works

This comprehensive update to the previous master plan reimagines the River's role in the County and provides a visionary framework for the restoration of its ecological functions and transformation of its contribution to the community. It recommends a new management structure to address maintenance responsibilities, river safety, and recreation opportunities and encourages creating a "River Rangers" youth education program focusing on river safety and natural resource education in order to build local pride.

To view this Plan: http://boe.lacity.org/lariverrmp/CommunityOutreach/pdf/LARRMP_Final_05_03_07.pdf

RELEVANT PLANS (CONTINUED)

LOWER LA RIVER REVITALIZATION PLAN (2017)

Lead Agency: Lower Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan Working Group, Chaired by San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy

This vision plan describes opportunities to improve the ecological health and resident's quality of life along the River and develops metrics to evaluate program progress. The identified project sites address river safety, community access, and restoration activities through design interventions that reactivate areas within and along the channel, while the Watershed Education Program for K-12 schools encourages place-based learning and connects the community back to the River.

To view this Plan: <http://lowerlariver.org/the-plan/>

TUJUNGA-PACOIMA WATERSHED PLAN (2008)

Lead Agency: The River Project

This plan emphasizes the watershed as the basis for urban planning and serves to inform future flood management plans that would improve water quality, restore ecological functions of the river, and increase recreational opportunities. It is a resource to help advocates, planners, relevant agencies, and the public understand current watershed conditions and catalyze collaborative planning efforts.

To view this Plan: <https://www.theriverproject.org/projects/tujungapacoima-watershed-plan/>

PACOIMA WASH VISION PLAN (2010)

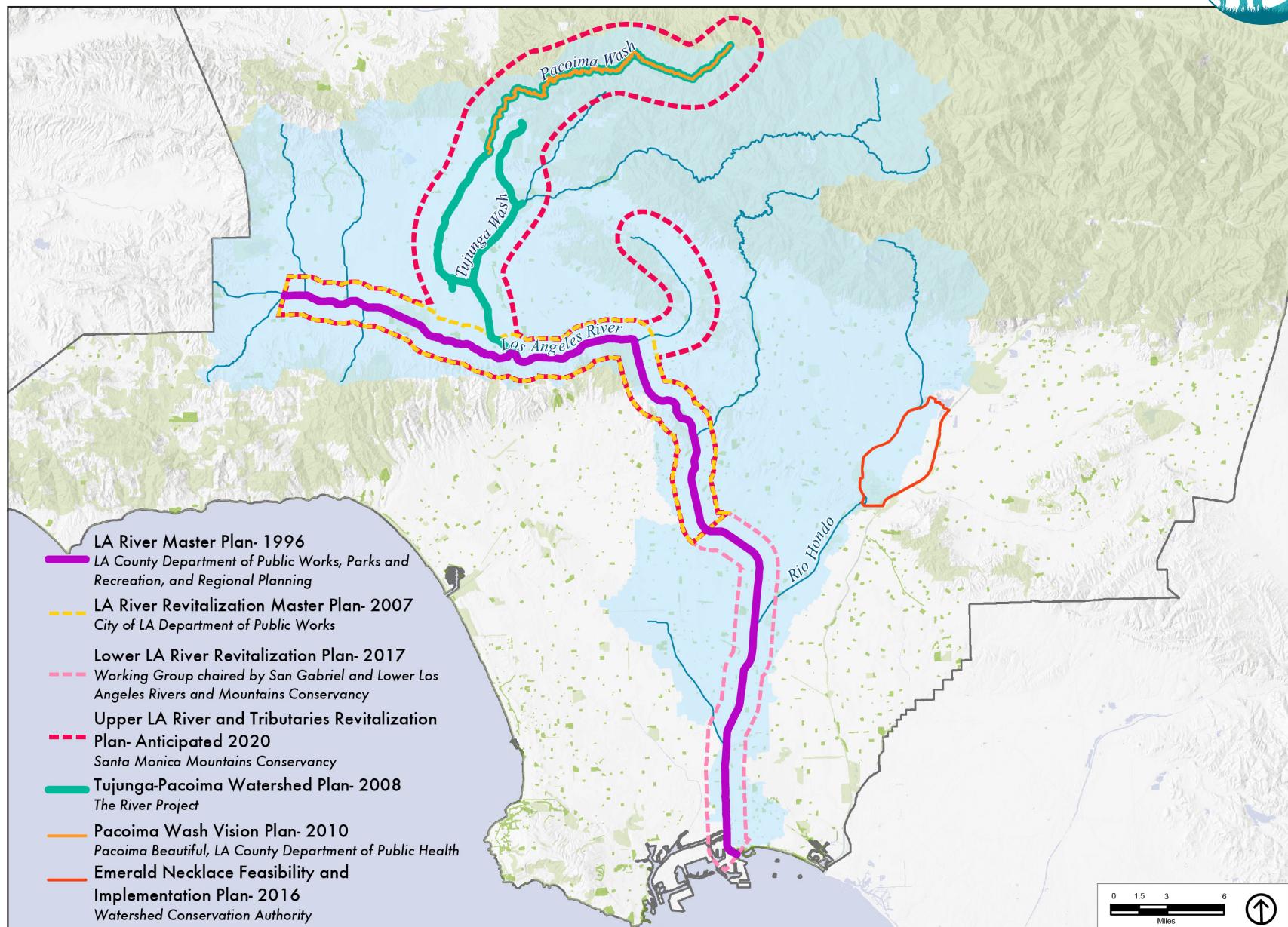
Lead Agency: Pacoima Beautiful, LA County Department of Public Health

This vision plan acknowledges the wash as a community asset and encourages revitalization efforts to improve habitat and recreational opportunities identified by the community. It proposes the development of new recreation facilities and multi-use paths along the river and expands on the previous Tujunga-Pacoima Watershed Plan by focusing interventions within the communities of Pacoima and Sylmar specifically.

To view this Plan: http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/place/docs/Pacoima_Wash_Vision_Plan%20Book_FINAL.pdf



Figure 3.4, Plan Focus Areas



CASE STUDY: MOUNTAINS RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY RANGER PROGRAM

MRCA's existing park ranger program is a highly relevant example of a local ranger program. Other relevant programs reviewed as part of the Phase 1 planning process are identified in Appendix D.

MRCA Park Rangers are responsible for protecting lands owned or managed by the Authority and performing a wide variety of law enforcement patrols, maintenance, interpretation, and fire patrols in the Southern California region. Their jurisdiction includes all MRCA and SMMC lands, the River Recreation Zone along the LA River, and lands under contract, including those owned by Santa Clarita Open Space, Desert and Mountain Conservation Authority, Habitat Authority, LA Sanitation, Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, and Watershed Conservation Authority.

MRCA rangers and staff are assigned to different geographic areas, but are available to move around as needed. All are trained in firefighting, swift water rescue, maintenance operations, and interpretation. Program staff currently includes:

- 18 full-time Field Rangers
- 1 part-time Ranger
- 7 Administrative Rangers
- 7 Maintenance park staff
- 5 River Safety staff

Partnerships and Funding

All rangers must be certified by the Park Rangers Association of California (PRAC). PRAC requires basic training in interpretation, maintenance and operations, resource management, fire management, emergency medical services, and law enforcement.

MRCA Rangers have also built various connections with other law enforcement agencies and provide emergency response and law enforcement assistance when needed. Additionally, they have partnered with the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) and People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) on homeless outreach.

Funding sources vary based on the activities in the park and local and state distributions. Traditional sources include Benefits Assessments, local Measures FF and GG, and Prop 84. Less traditional funds include revenue from private companies renting spaces for filming or other business-related projects and special events.

Maintenance and Resource Management

MRCA Park Rangers are responsible for park trail and service road maintenance and cleanup operations. Duties include identifying and removing safety hazards, repairing vandalism, removing graffiti and illegal dumping, landscaping natural areas, building and maintaining trails, and repairing signs. On some properties, rangers work with court referred workers, who provide 100 to 200 hours a month of maintenance assistance to put towards their community service requirement. Additionally, MRCA Rangers coordinate with other community groups utilizing park facilities and organize small-scale restoration and clean up events.

Resource enhancement activities include invasive plant species removal, revegetation and native plant restoration, and vandalism prevention. Due to their knowledge of the parks and relevant species, they have assisted with studies monitoring avifauna, large carnivore movement, herpetofauna, and the impact of wildlife underpasses.



Safety and Law Enforcement

MRCA Park Rangers are registered and trained California Peace Officers that patrol the properties and are authorized to enforce state laws, local ordinances, and conditions of use on parklands by issuing citations and making arrests. All rangers are trained wildland firefighters, with the ability to work on small fires on their own or assist with larger fires. Rangers are also trained in Emergency Medical Service Providers, Search and Rescue, Swift Water Rescue, Flood Rescue First Responders, CPR, and first aid. Depending on the particular property, there may be mounted Assisted Unit volunteers that patrol the back country and assist in medical aids, interpretation, and search and rescue efforts. All rangers are armed.

Rangers are dispatched by the California State Parks dispatch center or the MRCA 24-hour on-call systems. The number for on-call assistance is printed on all MRCA rule signs in the parks. While emergency calls placed through the 911 emergency system are the responsibility of the local law enforcement agency, local officers can call on MRCA Rangers for backup as necessary.



Educational Programs

Rangers offer curriculum-based environmental education programs, after-school programs for at-risk youth, and public programs for seniors, families, and young children. The Junior Ranger youth leadership program is a coed program for children ages eight to sixteen teaching environmental science, outdoor skills, and leadership skills through experiential learning in the parks. Rangers also lead nature hikes, present to various groups about resource management and environmental conservation, and lead training programs for individuals and other park professionals.

In the past, the MRCA Ranger program has offered a job training program, which hired young adults to help with the River Safety Program. The participants are on-call and provide assistance to the Rangers on various projects and assignments as necessary.

Homeless Outreach

MRCA Rangers often work with the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) and People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) to assist homeless individuals and families staying on parkland in obtaining access to necessary resources and services. Rangers make contact with individuals and coordinate with the partner agencies to connect them with various outreach programs. Services provided by the PATH Street Outreach Program include sack lunches, toiletries, and referrals to services and housing.



4: PROGRAM FRAMEWORK



FRAMEWORK FOR RIVER RANGER DEVELOPMENT

The Los Angeles River should be a celebration of the ecological and cultural diversity of communities along the corridor, highlighted by the various revitalization master plans, and has the potential to become a destination for visitors and locals alike. This section outlines the preliminary River Ranger Plan and consolidates key information related to each program component including the Guiding Principles and Goals, current services underway, and how other LA River plans and ranger programs address the topic. Each component also touches upon current public concerns and important considerations for cities, stakeholders, and planners moving forward in Phase 2. This workbook serves as a catalyst for plan development and a resource for stakeholders and the public to reference during the process.





PRELIMINARY DRAFT RIVER RANGER PLAN OUTLINE

It is anticipated that the final River Ranger Plan will contain the following components.

- **Introduction**

- Program Purpose and Background Context
- Planning Process and Context
- Key Issues
- Plan Contents and Organization

- **Program Overview**

- Vision, Guiding Principles and Goals
- Parent agency or organization
- Service Area

- **Governance Structure**

- **Program Components (Scope of Services provided by the Program)**

- Public Safety Presence
 - » Emergency Response
 - » River Safety
 - » Fire Management
 - » Public Safety Improvements (phones, signage, wayfinding, lighting, etc.)
- Maintenance and Resource Management
 - » Protection
 - » Enhancement/Restoration
 - » Monitoring of River conditions (debris, trash, water levels, etc.); trail, park and open space conditions; Utilization/visitation (including illegal/unsafe access)
 - » Maintenance, clean-up and debris removal
- Outreach
 - » Homeless Outreach
 - » LA River Identity: Engaging the broader public
- Recreation Programs
 - » Program/activities
 - » Role of Rangers
- Interpretation/Education Programs
 - » Topics
 - » Methods

- **Staffing and Employment (Titles and job descriptions)**

- Sworn Peace-Officers
- Interpretive Rangers
- Youth and Job Training Programs
- Seasonal Programs
- Other

- **Funding and Implementation**

- Anticipated Costs
- Funding Strategies
- Partnerships

MAINTENANCE AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Guiding Principle

Natural, cultural and built resources along the Los Angeles River provide multiple environmental and community benefits; these resources should be protected, maintained, enhanced, and interpreted for the public to ensure that the River is a safe and enjoyable place to visit.

Goals



Monitor the physical conditions, environmental health, and development of green space along the River (AB1558)



Maintain cleanliness and safety of resources and facilities (trails, parks, restrooms, etc.)



Engage communities in the protection and preservation of the River and its resources (AB1558)



Support existing and developing protection and restoration efforts through staff and volunteer efforts, partnerships, and programming



Create a consistent standard of resource and facility management along the River

Who is currently providing Maintenance and Resource Management?

- US Army Corps of Engineers
- LA County Flood Control District,
- State Lands Commission,
- Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority
- Watershed Conservation Authority
- LA County Department of Parks and Recreation
- City of LA Department of Public Works and Recreation and Parks
- Non-governmental organizations
- Other cities along the LA River

What activities are currently taking place?

- Trash, litter, and graffiti removal
- Landscaping and tree trimming
- Trail building and maintenance
- Facilities repair
- In-channel improvements: removal of invasive vegetation, vegetation replanting and sediment build-up



What other LA River Plans have said:

- All previous plans emphasized habitat enhancement and well-maintained amenities
- 2017 Lower LA River Revitalization Plan (LLARRP): encourages future projects to “green” adjacent neighborhoods by revegetating areas with native species to reconnect riparian habitats along the river.

How do other Ranger programs address Maintenance and Resource Management?

- By focusing on trail-building, facilities maintenance, cleanup operations, and vegetation projects.
- Restoration efforts typically emphasize invasive species removal and revegetation efforts to repair riparian buffers and enhance habitat connectivity.

What does the public say?

- Water issues and trash/debris are major safety concerns
- Resources management should be a main priority for River Rangers
- River Rangers should be stewards of the River’s natural and community resources, protecting ecological elements and enhancing the usability of the river for all individuals.

Key Considerations to be explored in Phase 2:

- Identify which maintenance and resource tasks appropriate for Rangers and other staff
- Clearly define safety presence/enforcement role
- Coordination with other existing efforts/entities
- Funding sources appropriate for program
- Educational and Mentorship programming

PUBLIC SAFETY

Guiding Principle

All designated access points, trails, parks and open spaces along the Los Angeles River should be safe for visitors to enjoy.

Goals

-  Improve public safety for visitors (AB1558)
-  Protect parks, open space, and other public space (AB1558)
-  Provide rules and regulations as well as preventative warnings and education to existing and potential River visitors
-  Ensure residents and visitors have information needed to contact appropriate public safety responders (maintenance, law enforcement, swift water rescue, and emergency services)
-  Facilitate the incorporation of safety measures along pathways and access points, such as adequate lighting, wayfinding signage, and emergency response call beacons
-  Reduce encampments from the River corridor through close collaboration with Los Angeles County Homeless Support Services

Who is currently providing Public Safety?

- LA County Sheriff's and Fire Departments
- City of LA Police Department, Fire Department, and Department of Recreation and Parks
- Cities, local law enforcement
- Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

What activities are currently taking place?

- General safety and law enforcement activities
- City and County Fire Departments are responsible for emergency response and employ Swift Water Rescue teams
- Water rescues are conducted by City and County Swift Water Rescue Team (fire fighters specifically trained and equipped for water rescues).
- Agencies will respond when there is an emergency call, they are not actively patrolling all areas under their jurisdiction, leading to inconsistent coverage along the River.
- The jurisdictions of the major law enforcement agencies in LA County are displayed in Figure 4.1.



What other LA River Plans have said:

- Emphasis on the need for increased patrol and signage along the River to address safety concerns, though do not assign the responsibility to a principal agency.
- Safety provision is included in the LA River Revitalization Master Plan, Lower LA River Revitalization Plan, Pacoima Wash Vision Plan.

How do other Ranger programs address Public Safety?

- For most programs, public safety is a key role.
- National Parks Service and other federal and state rangers typically receive training in emergency services.
- Rangers can be sworn peace officers who are armed and certified through various ordinances and local laws to perform arrests and distribute citations,
- Rangers in urban parks and job training programs are generally not armed.
- Some programs separate law enforcement from other roles -those that do not employ sworn peace officers rely on existing agencies for enforcement.

What does the public say?

- 86% of respondents identified they felt unsafe when visiting the river
- Differing opinions were presented regarding the role of a safety presence versus law enforcement presence on the River, and the responsibilities that a Ranger should undertake.
- Approximately 75% of respondents said that providing a "safety presence" was an extremely important role for River Rangers, while only approximately 54% said that peace officer/law enforcement was an extremely important role.

Key Considerations to be explored in Phase 2:

- Safety presence or peace officer role
- Identify rules and regulations to be enforced
- Role of volunteers and/or NGOs in providing safety presence
- Consider recommending a mobile app ("LA River- 311") that allows users to report issues or concerns

CHAPTER 4: FRAMEWORK FOR RIVER RANGER DEVELOPMENT

Figure 4.1, Law Enforcement Agencies Jurisdictions

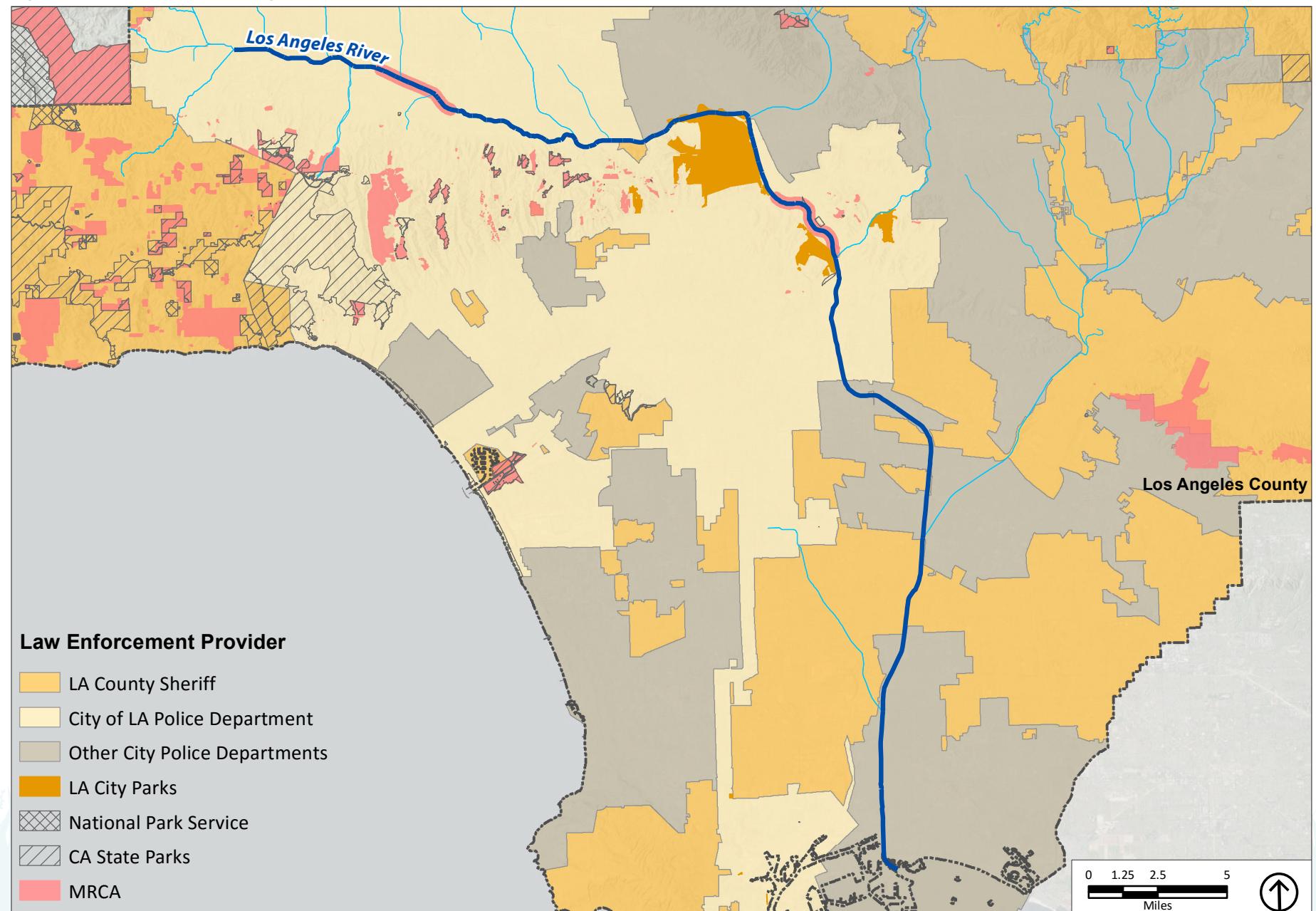
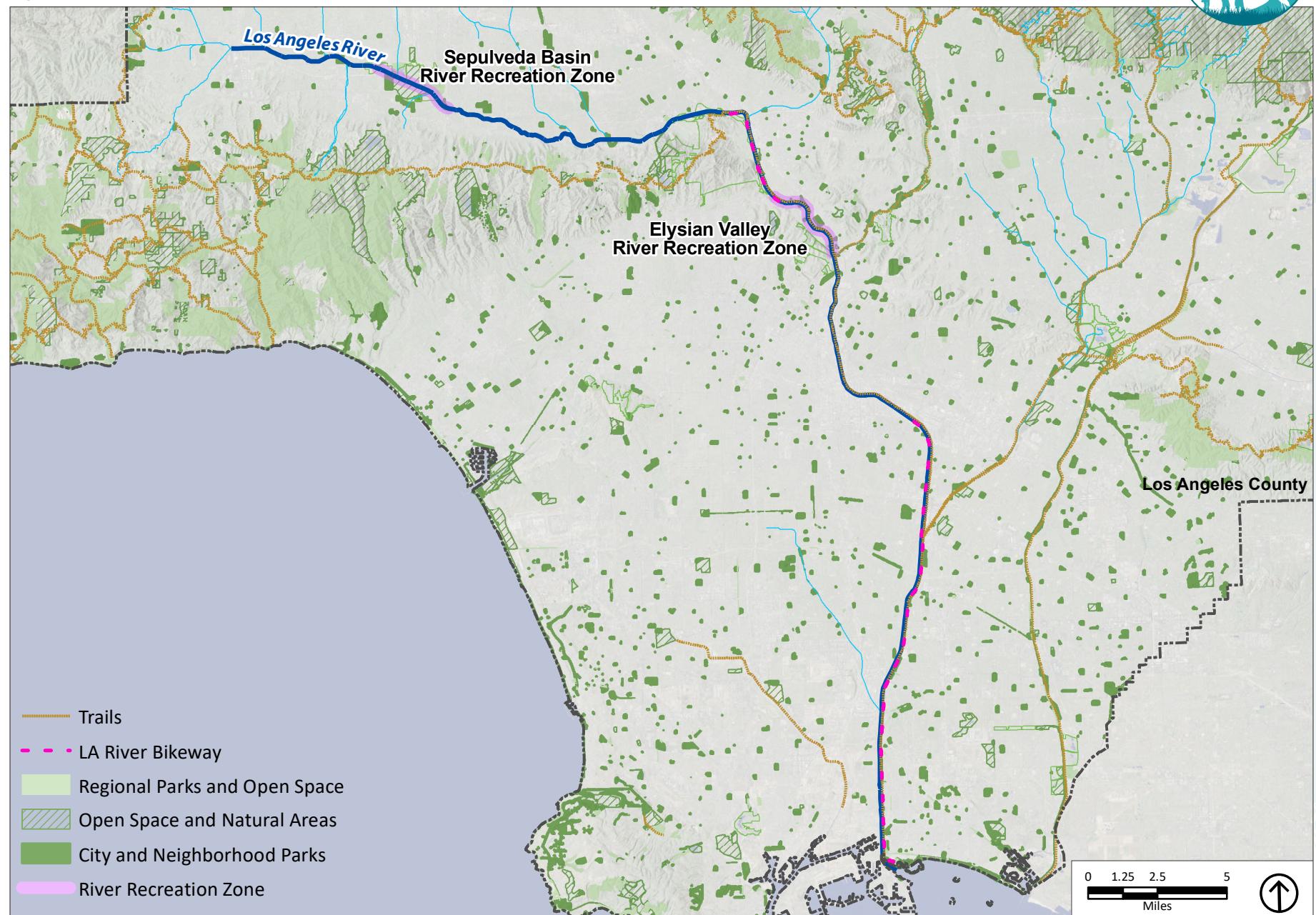




Figure 4.2, Parks and Recreation Areas



RECREATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Guiding Principle

The Los Angeles River should be an outdoor classroom that provides resources and experiences that build understanding and inspire appreciation of the river's ecology, history, and community benefits; as well as an experiential landscape that offers active and passive recreational opportunities that respond to the varying physical conditions along the River.

Goals

-  Improve public awareness of River access and recreational opportunities
-  Provide and promote safe, sustainable recreation opportunities
-  Collaborate with local agencies, businesses and non-profit organizations to increase recreation opportunities
-  Provide and facilitate education on safe river corridor access and recreational and educational opportunities
-  Improve public knowledge of river history and ecology
-  Engage the public in developing greater understanding of the River (citizen science and similar efforts)
-  Provide workforce development and employment opportunities, volunteer, and youth education programs

Who is currently providing Recreation and Education?

- LA County Department of Parks and Recreation
- City of LA Department of Recreation and Parks
- Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority
- State Lands Commission
- Water Conservation Authority
- San Gabriel and Lower LA Rivers and Mountains Conservancy
- Other non-governmental organizations

What activities are currently taking place?

- Provision of recreation and open space through parks and fitness zones
- Bicycle and multi-use trails
- Pedestrian trails and walking paths
- Access to and rental of recreation facilities
- During the summer, MRCA manages and monitors the LA River Recreation Zones, which are dedicated walking, fishing, and boating areas that allow the public to access and enjoy the river.
- Programs that promote watershed education and river health
- Organized river cleanups
- Informational signage, provision of brochures, and other materials to inform the public about safety and environmental concerns along the river.



What other LA River Plans have said:

- Encourage the development of greenways, trails, local parks, community centers, and equestrian trails to accommodate a wider range of recreational opportunities.
- Promote incorporating watershed education programs into school curriculum (LA County River Master Plan, LA River Revitalization Master Plan, Lower LA River Revitalization Plan, and Pacoima Wash Vision Plan).
- Watershed Education Program, mandated by AB350 during the creation of the LLARRP, developed lesson plans that emphasize place-based learning for K-12 students to teach environmental science outside of the classroom and build pride in the River.

How do other Ranger programs address Recreation and Education?

- Rangers often lead nature hikes, organize volunteer groups working in the parks, and administer environmental science programs in schools.
- Some programs are only focused on interpretation services due to their reliance on outside entities to address safety concerns.
- Some operate as job training programs, where participants learn technical maintenance skills, build leadership and communication skills, and educate the public about river safety and ecological principles.

What does the public say?

- Recreational program was desired but not the highest priority
- Educational programming and signage could help address concerns related to debris and water quality

Key Considerations to be explored in Phase 2:

- Identify types of recreation opportunities that should be prioritized
- Identify sites to connect with or where existing recreation facilities should be enhanced
- Consider economic opportunities along the River corridor
- Explore watershed and river education curriculum for schools and after-school/ weekend community programs

OUTREACH

Guiding Principle

All visitors should be encouraged to utilize the River, and provided information and resources to ensure safe and resource-sensitive use.

Goals

-  Educate the public regarding where and how to safely experience the River corridor
-  Actively engage with homeless populations as a trusted community presence; provide services, supplies, and information on available services and resources; connect homeless to Los Angeles County Homeless Support Services
-  Engage visitors in defining the River's identity as a community resource, and the role of the community River caretakers
-  Observe use of the river and adjacent trails, parks, and open space to proactively identify and respond to emerging issues and opportunities

Who is currently providing Outreach?

- Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority
- City of LA Police Department
- Other city police and public works departments
- Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority
- Other non-governmental organizations

What outreach activities are currently taking place?

- The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority works with city police departments and public works departments to clean up homeless encampments through due process.
- MRCA Rangers often make contact with individuals and try to connect them to street outreach programs organized by LAHSA and other local homeless services agencies.
- Numerous NGOs are focused on increasing community engagement with the River through volunteer and education opportunities



What other LA River Plans have said:

- All plans encourage educating the public so community members understand how to safely experience the River
- Emphasize developing community pride and celebrating the unique character of the River through revitalization projects and increased resident engagement.
- LA River Revitalization Master Plan and Lower LA River Revitalization Master Plan recommended the creation of new jobs and affordable housing options adjacent to the River for those living in and along the channel; and clearing the channel for other recreation and educational opportunities.

How do other Ranger programs address Outreach?

- Most programs include rangers that provide interpretation services to educate the public about the history and ecology of the park or region
- Many work with other local agencies and community groups to facilitate activities in the park.
- Few ranger programs explicitly address the interaction between rangers and homeless individuals, though one case study included a job training program for homeless youth.

What does the public say?

- Of participants that have never visited the river, approximately 50% were most concerned about trash/debris and pollution/water quality, followed by lack of maintenance and crime.
- Of the open ended responses submitted regarding safety concerns, over 10% referenced homeless or transient populations along the River with comments regarding actual or perceived safety concerns.
- Twenty-four comments indicated drug use as a safety concern when visiting the River. Additionally, participants indicated the need for Rangers to take a role in homeless outreach along the River.
- Only approximately 16% of individuals indicated that they feel safe when visiting the River.

Key Considerations to be explored in Phase 2:

- Identify the structure and geographic service area for the Program
- Address how to actively engage the homeless population in plan development?
- Consider the inclusion of multilingual signage and interpretation opportunities
- Consider establishing a community-based river stewards committee to foster citizen patrol and stewardship programs.
- Explore development of and Adopt-a-River Program and/or docent program

ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATION

Guiding Principle

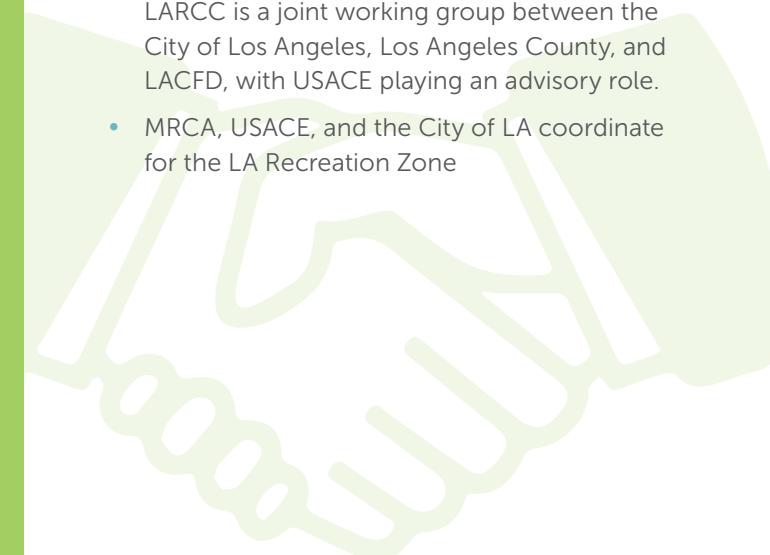
Coordination and collaboration among agencies with jurisdiction over the river, organizations that provide services and programs, and members of the public is essential to providing dependable services that enhance the river as a natural and community resource. The River Ranger Program will act as a central conduit to bring together all parties involved.

Goals

-  Coordinate the work of river rangers with programs and services (AB1558)
-  Foster collaboration among those with jurisdiction over the river (AB1558)
-  Promote equal access and equity among all communities along the River with regard to the development and placement of improvements along the river (AB1558)
-  Develop adequate funding strategies, partnerships, and sponsorship opportunities to ensure program sustainability
-  Promote diversity and inclusion (AB1558)
-  Offer employment opportunities with local hire as a focus, as well as creation of volunteer opportunities
-  Solicit and address visitor input on concerns, issues, and opportunities

How are efforts of agencies and organizations currently coordinated?

- City governments coordinate with local and County agencies for other service provision.
- The LA River Cooperation Committee (LARCC) facilitates coordination and evaluation of projects in the upper reach. LARCC is a joint working group between the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, and LACFD, with USACE playing an advisory role.
- MRCA, USACE, and the City of LA coordinate for the LA Recreation Zone





What other LA River Plans have said:

- All plans emphasize the importance of collaboration among agencies and service providers with jurisdictions along the River corridor for successful implementation, particularly between safety providers and local governments.
- The Tujunga-Pacoima Watershed Plan and Pacoima Wash Vision Plan were developed as “living plans,” with the ability to adapt to future input from stakeholders.
- LA River Revitalization Master Plan and the Lower Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan identify potential job creation opportunities for community members, as well as policies to protect communities along the River to ensure equitable access.

How do other Ranger programs address Administration and Coordination?

- Programs utilize partnerships with other agencies and organizations to allow Rangers to focus on specific service areas that complement existing programs.
- Programs are often sub-divisions of jurisdictional agencies, yet may contract services to other agencies and land-owners.
- Collaboration with local governments and non-governmental organizations is important for many programs that include youth employment and training programs.

What does the public say?

- Over 50- percent of survey participants were interested in employment or volunteer opportunities.
- Participants supported a wide range of roles for Rangers, including many that overlap with services provided by existing agencies.

Key Considerations to be explored in Phase 2:

- Program service area (geographic)
- Parent agency and/or governance
- Relationships with existing agencies and organizations
- Volunteer programs
- Local hire and Job training programs
- Tracking use and soliciting visitor input to inform management and programming decisions (such as a 3-1-1 Resource System)
- Funding strategies and stable funding mechanisms

