

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 24, 2021

The Honorable Shalanda Young
Acting Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

The Honorable Michael L. Connor
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20314

Dear Acting Director Young and Assistant Secretary Connor:

We write to strongly urge you to include \$272.8 million in federal funding appropriated in the recently enacted Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) legislation and in Fiscal Year 2023 through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Fiscal Year 2023 Work Plan for the Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Project.

We are at a critical moment where we can sustainably transform the Los Angeles River from a concrete canal back into a place of community and ecological restoration. To do so, we respectfully request that \$244.8 million be included in the upcoming the IIJA Army Crops Work Plan for:

- Reaches 1 & 2 (*\$45.9m*): Pollywog Park to Ferraro Fields – Covers approximately 2.25 miles and implements a habitat corridor with riparian planting on overbanks of both sides of the River, and modifies the trapezoidal bank to a vertical bank, creating additional soft bottom width in the channel and terraces.
- Reach 4 (*\$37.7m*): Brazil Street to the Los Feliz Boulevard Bridge – Approximately 1.75 miles long and includes daylighting of multiple streams/storm drains and additional riparian habitat to adjacent over bank golf course areas.
- Reach 3: (*\$132.5m*) Ferraro Fields to Brazil Street – Approximately 1 mile of riparian corridor that includes daylighting of streams, creating a side channel that would flow along the west side of Ferraro Fields, and adding substantial restoration that widens the Verdugo Wash confluence to create a combined riparian and marsh habitat community.

In addition, we request \$28 million in funding for a Construction New Start for the L.A. River Ecosystem Restoration P3 Pilot project in the USACE Fiscal 2023 Work Plan. Specifically, this funding would support work in Reach 7 which runs from I-5 to Main Street; this 1-mile segment includes the restoration of the Arroyo Seco confluence and the overbank connections to the L.A. State Historic Park.

This funding will finally allow a community-embraced project that has been decades in the making to move forward and leverage alternative delivery approaches to save costs, accelerate delivery, and reduce the USACE backlog effectively and efficiently. This project will restore hundreds of acres of habitat along the river, add trails to connect people with nature and the River, and support equity, environmental justice, and climate resilience for the underserved communities that are adjacent to this urban river.

The Los Angeles Ecosystem Restoration Project has a signed favorable Chief's Report, has been authorized by Congress, and the City is ready to work with the Corps to bring this project from concept to reality. The USACE formally designated the L.A. River project as a Civil Works Public-Private Partnership (P3) Pilot project in March 2020, which reduces the federal government's share of cost and risk and completes the project quicker. A value for money analysis from the USACE shows that the P3-alternative delivery would save the Federal government at least 20 percent in construction costs. The project is ready to start construction using alternative delivery in a partnership with the City and the USACE.

This project emerged from the input of thousands of Angelenos and will directly benefit hundreds of thousands of people who live in historically disadvantaged communities with severely limited access to nature. Importantly, funding this project will help spur economic recovery and support vital aquatic ecosystem restoration, one of the key aspects of the USACE's mission, in the heart of the City of Los Angeles. This project will give all Americans the unique opportunity to enjoy and take pride in the stewardship of the environment and develop new economic growth opportunities. This includes restoring ecosystems in places where access to nature has declined, like cities and urbanized areas.

As such, we respectfully request you support \$28 million for a Construction New Start for the L.A. River Ecosystem Restoration P3 Pilot project for the USACE in the FY23 budget request and \$244.8 million in the pending IIJA spending plan to kick start this important project with the anticipation of future appropriations to bring aquatic ecosystem restoration to an urbanized environment.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Jimmy Gomez
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Alex Padilla
UNITED STATES SENATOR



Alan Lowenthal
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Linda T. Sánchez
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Ted Lieu
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Grace Napolitano
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Tony Cárdenas
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Adam Schiff
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Brad Sherman
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