PUBLIC NOTICE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS **BUILDING STRONG®**
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT

Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration (LARER) Project

Reach 1 Phase A

Los Angeles, California

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has prepared a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) to the Final Environmental Impact Statement / Environmental Impact Report (Final EIS/EIR; USACE, 2015) for the Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Project (LARER Project). The 2015 Final EIS/EIR evaluated the potential environmental effects of the project as a whole based on a conceptual level of design detail. The SEA was prepared for the Reach 1 Phase A portion of the LARER Project to evaluate details of the design that were not known at the time of the Final EIS/EIR and re-evaluate potential environmental consequences, such as impacts to traffic, air quality, noise and recreation, that may have changed as the result of design refinement or changes to site conditions.

The purpose of the overarching LARER Project is to restore native riparian, freshwater marsh and aquatic habitat communities along the Los Angeles River (LAR). Reach 1 Phase A is an approximately 20-acre area located at the upstream end of the LARER Project within Pollywog Park. Pollywog Park is within the boundaries of Griffith Park in the City of Los Angeles and borders the City of Burbank to the north. The scope of this SEA is limited to the Reach 1 Phase A portion of the LARER Project. The Final EIS/EIR described Reach 1 as including riparian corridor restoration in the overbank areas, water harvesting features (*i.e.,* swales, depressions, etc.) achieved via micro-grading, storm drain modification to create surface features and irrigation elements. The refined design for Reach 1 Phase A aligns with the conceptual design of the Final EIS/EIR but includes more specific definition of the size and location of anticipated water harvesting features, as well as additional detail regarding the inclusion of recreation elements and the maintenance of existing equestrian recreational uses.

The Reach 1 Phase A design consists of the following primary elements:

- Site grading to achieve topographical diversity and provide for development of water harvesting features and associated habitat.
- Installation of an underground liner (organic or synthetic) to help retain water within the water harvesting features, with two different liner designs considered.
- Vegetation restoration focused predominantly on the creation of high-quality riparian habitat, with minor amounts of transitional habitat included on project margins or near residential areas, and incorporation of wetland vegetation within water harvesting features.
- Incorporation of new multi-purpose public trails suitable for both pedestrian and equestrian traffic.
- Relocation of two existing equestrian recreation features to ensure the preservation of current recreational uses on-site.

Water harvesting features will be planted with a mix of wetland plant species surrounded by riparian vegetation. The water harvesting features will provide needed water to sustain restored riparian vegetation. The relocated equestrian features are expected to replace the current on-site equestrian features, therefore not changing the current use of the site. Additionally, multi-use trails will be included for pedestrian and equestrian use. The remainder of the site will be replanted with additional native riparian vegetation and a minor quantity of transitional vegetation where appropriate and necessary.

Air quality impacts were analyzed for two different design options for water harvesting features (clay lined and synthetically lined). Both options would result in less than significant impacts. Noise impact analyses were updated to confirm the project would not result in significant noise impacts to surrounding residential homes and the Disney Animation Building. Although there may be temporary displacement of equestrian use, after construction the site is expected to provide improved recreational conditions and retain its current recreational use. Therefore, impacts

to recreational resources will remain insignificant. There are no additional impacts to traffic and a traffic management plan will be prepared prior to the start of construction activities. Local residents notified the Corps about potential environmental contaminants at the Reach 1 Phase A site. Based on available information from previous focused contamination analyses, contamination on site is expected to be below actionable levels. However, a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) will be conducted by the City of Los Angeles prior to the start of the construction to confirm the site is free of contamination. In the unlikely event that actionable levels of contamination are identified by the Phase I ESA, the City of Los Angeles would be responsible for the cleanup of any contaminated soils consistent with the requirements of the California Department of Toxic Substance Control.

The findings of this SEA confirm that no additional significant impacts under NEPA are anticipated as the result of constructing the Reach 1 Phase A component of the LARER project. As a result, a supplemental EIS is not warranted at this time.

Comments on this public notice has been extended to March 31, 2023. Comments can be submitted electronically to: jesse.w.ray@usace.army.mil.