



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Sepulveda Dam Basin

Los Angeles County, California

Master Plan
and
Environmental
Assessment

SEPTEMBER 2011

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Los Angeles District
P.O. Box 532711
Los Angeles, CA 90053-2325

*Funding provided in part by
The American Recovery
And Reinvestment Act
(Public Law 111-5)*



SEPULVEDA
WILDLIFE AREA

'A SYMPHONY OF SOUNDS'



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Sepulveda Dam Basin

Los Angeles County, California

Master Plan
and
Environmental Assessment

SEPTEMBER 2011

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Los Angeles District
P.O. Box 532711
Los Angeles, CA 90053-2325

Funding provided in part by
**The American Recovery
and Reinvestment Act**
(Public Law 111-5)



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This *Master Plan and Draft Environmental Assessment for Sepulveda Dam Basin* is an update to the 1981 *Sepulveda Basin Master Plan and Final Environmental Impact Report/Statement* and *1995 Supplement 1 to the 1981 Sepulveda Basin Master Plan Including Environmental Assessment*. The Federal project, Sepulveda Dam Flood Control Project, (Dam or Project) refers to the structures, amenities, and lands necessary for operation of the Dam. The Sepulveda Dam Basin (Basin) refers to the lands acquired for the construction, operation and maintenance of the Project. A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Master Plan for an authorized civil works project is a conceptual Project-specific document. It describes the existing resources in the Basin and provides a guide for Corps land management responsibilities and decisions in regard to project lands, water, and associated resources. The Master Plan provides direction and guidance for land development and utilization in the Basin pursuant to applicable Federal laws, regulations, and policies.

Since the 1981 Master Plan, the land and resource uses within the Basin and have changed significantly. Some of the recreation amenities proposed in the 1981 Master Plan were never built. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area has been expanded, the Anthony C. Beilenson Park the Sepulveda Basin Off-leash Dog Park, Pedlow Field Skate Park, and a Universally Accessible Playground have been built, and Bull Creek has been restored. The updated Master Plan reflects changes in the Basin and the application of Federal laws, and Corps' regulations, policy, and guidance that have been amended or changed since the 1981 Master Plan.

This Master Plan and associated Environmental Assessment (EA) trace the history and development of the Basin and provides the baseline condition of existing resources and amenities. Four community workshops were held during the preparation of this Master Plan to: (1) provide information to the public about the Corps' master planning process; (2) identify the public's needs, desires, and concerns regarding current and future use of the Basin, and (3) gain feedback on existing and proposed changes to the existing land use classifications in the Basin.

Meetings were held with the City of Los Angeles (City), who leases a significant portion of the Basin from the Corps for recreational purposes. The City provided to the Corps information pertaining to current operations and maintenance, future plans, and current and future needs and goals. Visitation data was also provided by the City. Taken together and in light of an integrated ecological approach to land management, the Corps identified resource objectives for land uses as well as each land use classification in the Basin. Resource objectives shape Corps' decisions that pertain to future development and activities.

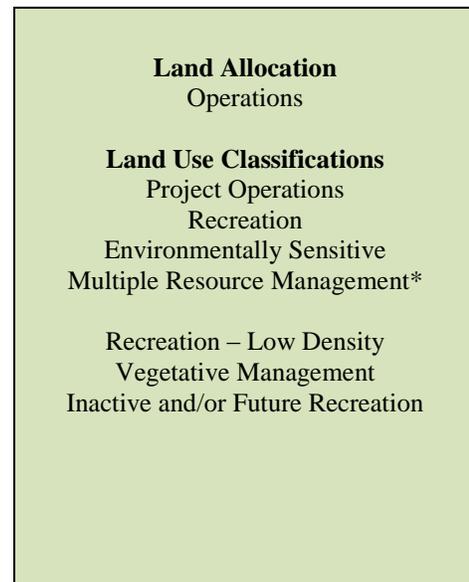
The Basin is classified according to land use classifications, which are dictated by Corps policies and guidance. The Master Plan recommends land at the Basin to be classified into six land use classifications: 1) Project Operations; 2) Recreation; 3) Environmentally Sensitive; 4) Multiple Resource Management - Recreation - Low Density; 5) Multiple Resource Management - Vegetative Management; and 6) Multiple Resource Management - Inactive and/or Future Recreation. The Master Plan provides guidance for balancing flood risk management requirements, recreation opportunities, and preservation of natural resources for current and future generations.

4 LAND ALLOCATION, LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS, AND RESOURCE INVENTORY

The Corps land use classification system is defined in EP 1130-2-550. The Corps acquires land for a specific purpose. This purpose is its “allocation.” Allocated lands may be utilized under the opportunities and constraints of “land use classifications.” This section describes land allocations and land use classifications, and provides a complete description of all lands within the Basin and their existing classifications, uses, conditions, and needs.

4.1 Land Allocation

Land allocation refers to the identification and documentation of lands at Civil Works projects in accordance with the authorized purposes for which they were or are to be acquired. There are four land allocation categories applicable to Corps projects; (1) operations (e.g., flood risk management, water supply, hydropower, etc.), (2) recreation, (3) fish and wildlife, and (4) mitigation (Corps EP 1130-2-550). In the case of Sepulveda Dam, the total Basin area of 2,131.90 acres was acquired for the purpose of flood risk management, which falls under the allocation of operations. This allocation establishes the primary and uncompromising purpose of the Basin as operations for the purpose of flood risk management. All land use classifications are secondary to this purpose and must be compatible with flood risk management.



4.2 Land Use Classifications

Allocated project lands are further classified for development and resource management consistent with authorized project purposes and Federal laws including the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA). The classification process refines the land allocations to fully utilize project lands and must consider public desires, legislative authority, as well as regional and project specific resource requirements and suitability. The Project Operations allocation takes precedent over any other classification categories. For example, agricultural or grazing use of project land is not a land use classification but may be an interim or corollary use to meet management objectives. Land is classified into one of the following categories:

Project Operations This classification category includes lands required for the structure, operations center, office, maintenance compound, and other areas that are used solely for Project Operations.

Recreation Land developed for intensive outdoor recreational activities by the visiting public, including developed recreation areas, and areas for concession, resort, and quasi-public development. Recreation areas planned for initial development are included in this classification.

Undeveloped areas are classified as Multiple Resource Management until initiation of the development.

Mitigation This only includes land acquired or designated specifically for mitigation. Land classified in this category should be evaluated for consideration for lease or license to the Department of the Interior or the state.

Environmentally Sensitive Lands with scientific, ecological, cultural or aesthetic features have been identified. The identification of these areas must be supported by narrative explaining the rationale for the classification. These areas, normally within one of the other classification categories, must be considered by management to ensure the sensitive areas are not adversely impacted. This classification anticipates that there would be limited or no development for public use on land in this classification. There is a strict prohibition against agricultural or grazing uses.

Multiple Resource Management Lands managed for one or more of, but not limited to, these activities to the extent that they are compatible with the primary allocation(s). The activities should be fully explained in the narrative portion of the Master Plan.

Recreation - Low Density Low density recreation activities such as hiking, primitive camping, wildlife observation, hunting, or similar low density recreational activities.

Wildlife Management Lands in this sub-category shall be evaluated for consideration for lease or license to the Department of the Interior or the state, or shall be designated for direct management by the Corps.

Vegetative Management Lands in this in this sub-category shall be managed for the protection and development of forest and vegetative cover.

Inactive and/or Future Recreation Areas Recreation areas planned for the future or that have been temporarily closed. These lands will be classified as Multiple Resource Management in the interim.

Easement lands All lands for which the Corps holds an easement interest but not fee title. Planned use and management of easement lands will be in strict accordance with the terms and conditions of the easement estate acquired for the Project.

4.3 Guiding Principles

Community input with Corps' guidance was utilized to identify guiding principles for the management of the Basin. These include:

- Ensure that all uses within the Basin are consistent with the flood risk management operations;
- Protect and restore ecosystem function;
- Ensure that a variety of recreational opportunities are provided for public use; Stakeholders recognize their environmental responsibility and preservation of cultural and

historical resources; and Management of the Basin lands and activities should integrate sustainable practices.

4.4 Land Use Classification Restrictions

Certain uses and activities at the Basin are not compatible in all classifications or are limited within classifications. Uses and activities designated as incompatible within a classification are not permitted. Additional guidelines and restrictions applicable to all land use classifications can be found in Appendix A, Outgrant Policies and Leases.

4.4.1 Project Operations

- No recreation activities are permitted within Operations areas except on specifically designated trails or by permission of the District Commander.
- Potentially compatible activities that require review and approval by the District Commander include: filming, training activities for public organizations (e.g., police and fire departments), biological surveys, and volunteer activities. Filming, training and biological surveys must comply with the procedures and requirements outlined in the applicable appendices to this Master Plan. Volunteer activities require case-by-case analyses.
- Use by government personnel during emergencies (fire department staging, etc.) is potentially compatible but shall require case-by-case analysis under the applicable procedures and requirements, including Federal environmental laws.

4.4.2 Recreation

- Sports fields, amenities, and structures/development to support recreational uses require specific analysis per the recreation outgrant policy (Appendix A).
- Dogs are allowed only on-leash, 6' in length or less, except where dog parks for off-leash use are specifically designated.
- Bicycles are allowed on designated trails, paths, and roads. Trails may be closed in the event of excessive erosion.
- Horses are allowed on trails, paths, and roads, but no grazing is allowed. All fecal matter shall immediately be removed by the rider.
- Organized volunteer activities that are non-invasive or minimally invasive, such as trash pickup, held outside of breeding season (15 March – 15 September) or over 100 feet from environmentally sensitive areas are considered compatible.
- Special events are preferred at the areas designated in the Special Events Policy. Special events may be permitted outside these designated areas in certain circumstances subject to event-specific review. See Appendix A5, Special Events Policy for additional guidance.
- Filming and training activities may be compatible and should be coordinated with the lessee.

4.4.3 Environmentally Sensitive

- Structures/development are not generally considered compatible, only to support trail users (e.g., restrooms, drinking/water fountains, garbage & recycling cans, informational

signage/kiosks, and benches). Picnic tables shall be limited and generally located in close proximity to trailheads or other developed areas.

- Dogs are not compatible. No dogs are allowed whether on- or off-leash.
- Bicycles, skateboards, and roller-skates are not allowed. Use of bicycles, skateboards, and roller-skates on dirt trails can contribute to erosion, creating a safety hazard.
- Horses are not allowed in Environmentally Sensitive Areas.
- Fishing is not allowed in Environmentally Sensitive areas.
- Organized volunteer activities that are non-invasive or minimally invasive, such as trash pickup, held outside of breeding season (15 March – 15 September), may be considered compatible but may require specific environmental analysis.
- Special events are not compatible with this classification. No special events may be held within or traverse Environmentally Sensitive areas. This restriction includes, but is not limited to, organized walk/run events and bicycle races.
- Boating and swimming are not compatible with this classification.
- Restoration proposals are compatible. All requests require specific analysis.
- Biological surveys may be compatible subject to certain restrictions and should be coordinated with the City, or the Corps, if the area has not been leased to the City.
- Still photography is compatible with this classification. Professional still photography may be compatible subject to certain restrictions and should be coordinated with the City or the Corps, if the area has not been leased to the City.

4.4.4 MRM - Recreation - Low Density

- Amenities and structures/development to support recreational uses require specific analysis per the recreation outgrant policy (Appendix A).
- Allowable structures include restrooms, drinking/water fountains, garbage & recycling cans, informational signage/kiosks, benches, picnic tables, group picnic areas, etc. Designated, organized sports fields are NOT compatible with this classification.
- Dogs are compatible only on leashes six feet or less in length, except where dog parks for off-leash use are specifically designated.
- Bicycles are allowed on designated trails, paths, and roads. Dirt trails may be closed in the event of excessive erosion.
- Horses are allowed on trails, paths, and roads, but no grazing is allowed. All fecal matter shall immediately be removed by the rider.
- Organized volunteer activities that are non-invasive or minimally invasive, such as trash pickup, held outside of breeding season (15 March through 15 September) or over 100 feet from environmentally sensitive areas, are considered compatible.
- Limited special events may be compatible. Special events are preferred in the land use classification and may be permitted subject to event-specific review. See the Appendix A, Outgrant Policies for additional guidance.
- Still photography is compatible with this classification. Professional still photography may be compatible subject to certain restrictions and should be coordinated with the City, other lessee, or the Corps, if the area has not been otherwise outgranted.

4.4.5 MRM - Vegetative Management

- Structures/development is generally considered compatible only to support trail users (e.g., restrooms, drinking/water fountains, garbage & recycling cans, informational signage/kiosks, and benches). Picnic tables shall be limited and generally located in close proximity to trailheads or other developed areas.
- Dogs are compatible only on leashes six feet or less in length, on designated trails. No dogs are allowed off designated trails, whether on- or off-leash.
- Bicycles are allowed only on designated trails. Use of bicycles on dirt trails can contribute to erosion. Trails may be closed to bicycles in the event of safety or environmental concerns.
- Horses are compatible on existing trails, but no grazing is allowed. All fecal matter shall immediately be removed by the rider.
- Organized volunteer activities that are non-invasive or minimally invasive, such as trash pickup, held outside of breeding season (15 March to 15 September), may be considered compatible but may require specific environmental analysis.
- Special events are not compatible with this classification. No special events may be held within or traverse MRM-Vegetation Management areas.. This restriction includes, but is not limited to, organized walk/run events and bicycle races.
- Still photography is compatible with this classification. Professional still photography may be compatible subject to certain restrictions and should be coordinated with the lessee, or the Corps, if the area has not been otherwise outgranted.
- Restoration proposals may be compatible with the MRM –Vegetative Management classification. All requests require specific analysis. These areas are generally favored for restoration projects such as Corps’ Civil Works ecosystem restoration projects.
- Biological surveys may be compatible subject to certain restrictions and should be coordinated with the lessee, or the Corps, if the area has not been leased to others.

4.4.6 MRM – Inactive or Future Recreation

- Areas may include recreation leased area and leases for non-recreational purposes.
- Dogs are compatible only on recreation-leased area, on leashes six feet or less.
- Limited special events may be compatible. Special events are preferred at the areas designated in the Special Events Policy. Special events may be permitted outside these designated areas in certain circumstances subject to event-specific review. See Appendix A, Special Events Policy for additional guidance.
- Filming, training, and volunteer activities may be compatible and should be coordinated with the lessee or the Corps if the area is not leased.

4.5 Existing Facilities

Golf Courses

Sepulveda Golf Courses The Sepulveda Golf Courses consist of two 18-hole public golf courses, Encino Municipal and Balboa Municipal on approximately 313 acres of land bounded on the north/northeast by the Los Angeles River, on the south by Burbank Boulevard, and on the west by Balboa Boulevard. The golf course complex includes a pro shop, a lighted driving range, practice putting greens, practice chipping greens, cart rentals, club rentals, restrooms, and a restaurant with banquet rooms and a lounge. The courses are irrigated with water from the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant. The golf courses and associated amenities were developed by the City.

Woodley Lakes Municipal Golf Course Woodley Lakes Municipal Golf Course, built in 1976, is a public course with 18 holes with a total length of 6,803 yards. The course is located south of Victory Boulevard and west of Woodley Boulevard, and occupies approximately 184 acres of land. The course includes a pro shop, a lighted driving range, practice putting greens, practice chipping greens, cart rental, club rental, and a restaurant with a banquet facilities and lounge, and restroom amenities and a concession stand. The course is irrigated using recycled water from the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant. The golf course and associated amenities were developed by the City.

Anthony C. Beilenson Park This park occupies approximately 80 acres of land and is bounded by the Los Angeles River to the south, Balboa Blvd to the west, Victory Boulevard on the north, and the Woodley Lakes Municipal Golf Course on the east. The centerpiece of the park is Lake Balboa, a 27 acre recreation lake filled with water from the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant. Surrounding the lake are picnic areas which include barbecue pits and picnic tables, drinking fountains, rest rooms, shelters, a 1.3 mile jogging/walking path with covered benches provided along the path. Amenities include a first aid/lifeguard station, a fly casting area, fishing, boat, and remote-control boating. No swimming is allowed in the lake and power boats are not permitted. The park was developed jointly by the City and the Corps.

Anthony C. Beilenson Park and Lake Balboa



Universally Accessible Playground The Universally Accessible Playground (UAP) is located south of Lake Balboa in Anthony C. Beilenson Park. The UAP was completed in June 2008 and has two separate play areas, one section for two to five-year-olds, and one for five to twelve-year-olds. The areas feature swings, ladders, a variety of balancing elements, climbers and slides. The ground in the play area is covered with rubber matting to provide fall protection. The UAP was developed by the City.

Bull Creek Restoration Area The Bull Creek Restoration Area is located east of Balboa Boulevard and to the west of the Lake Balboa in Anthony C. Beilenson Park. The area is located on approximately 28 acres. The area includes 3,000 feet of restored Bull Creek. An oxbow channel has been excavated to the west of the Creek. Reclaimed water from Lake Balboa is released into the channel to supplement the existing flow. Aquatic, riparian, and native upland habitat has been established on the site. Severe erosion along the east bank of the creek as a result of 2009-2010 storms, as well as siltation of the oxbow will require further restoration of the area. Pedestrian bridges and walkways provide access. Interpretative nodes offer educational opportunities to visitors. The Bull Creek Restoration Area was completed in 2009. The area was restored jointly by the City and the Corps.



Balboa Sports Complex

Balboa Sports Complex The complex is an 85-acre facility located northwest of the intersection of Balboa and Burbank Boulevards. It includes four lighted baseball diamonds with bleachers for spectator seating, a tennis center with 16 lighted courts, a tennis pro shop, outdoor basketball courts which are lighted, children's play areas at two locations with metal and plastic play equipment and sand and rubber ground cover, an unlighted soccer field, a lighted football field, and lighted volleyball courts. Three structures with restrooms are located on the Sports Center grounds. The Sports Complex also includes the Balboa Park Community Center which has an indoor gymnasium. The Balboa Sports Complex was developed by the City.



Woodley Park and Adjacent Amenities

Woodley Park is 80-acres bordering the western and southern sides of the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant. The park includes barbeque pits, an unlighted baseball diamond, children's play area, picnic tables, and restrooms. The park is divided into two sections with similar amenities in each. Section 1 has 154 parking places. The section has 26 picnic tables, six

barbeques and is shaded by trees. Section 2 has 80 parking places. This section has 32 picnic tables. Restroom amenities are located nearby. The park was developed jointly by the City and the Corps.

The Japanese Garden is located on the grounds of the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant. The garden covers an area of 6.5 acres. Reclaimed water from the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant is used to supply the water features in the garden. An admission fee is charged to enter the garden. The garden was developed by the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation.



Woodley Park Archery Range is located in the far northeastern portion of the Basin on approximately 8 acres adjacent to Woodley Park. Amenities include a partially enclosed 18 meter short range and a 90 meter long range which has 12 lanes and is equipped with compressed bales. The long range is ADA-accessible. Restrooms are located in the area. The range was developed by the City.



Sepulveda Basin Cricket Fields are located in the northeastern portion of the Basin. The facility has two cricket fields. They are located on land leased to the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation. The Cricket Fields include bleachers, a picnic area with picnic tables, restrooms, and a parking lot.



Model Airplane Field is located northwest of the confluence of Woodley Creek and the Los Angeles River. The field occupies approximately 15 acres and includes an open graded field for radio controlled and tethered model airplanes. The field has a parking lot and restroom amenities. The field was developed by the City. The restrooms were developed jointly by the Corps and the City.

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area The wildlife area covers an **area of 130 acres** and is located in the northeastern portion of the Basin, bounded by Burbank Boulevard on the south, Woodley Avenue on the west, Woodley Park on the north, and the Sepulveda Dam Embankment to the east. The wildlife area features a 12- acre wildlife lake with a .75- acre bird-refuge island. Water is supplied to the wildlife lake by the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant. Native annuals, shrubs, and trees have been planted throughout the area. The area also has an educational staging area and amphitheatre, pathways with signage and viewing areas, Haskell Creek has been reconfigured and re-vegetated, with pedestrian bridges crossing the creek. Work on the wildlife area began in 1979 with the establishment of a 48 acre riparian area. Over the years, the refuge has been improved and expanded, with the last major expansion in 1998 by the Corps and the City.

Hjelte Sports Center is an approximately 12-acre facility located in the southern portion of the Basin between Burbank Boulevard and Encino Creek to the north and the Dam embankment to the south. The complex has four lighted baseball fields, bleachers at each field, restroom amenities, a concession stand, and a storage facility. It was developed jointly by the City and the Corps.

Sepulveda Garden Center The garden center is approximately 12-acres located south of U.S Route 101, west of Hayvenhurst Avenue, and north of Magnolia Boulevard. The garden center provides 800 garden plots for local citizens to grow fruits, vegetables, flowers, and herbs. Each plot is 10 feet wide by 20 feet wide. A fee is charged for use of the garden plots. Additional amenities include public telephones, first aid supplies, and restrooms. A greenhouse is available for gardeners for germinating of seeds for transplanting. The Sepulveda Garden Center was developed by the City.

several lanes of traffic to move from one area to another in the Basin. Cyclists may readily employ existing roadways, but pedestrians must find suitable crossing points. Woodley Avenue bisects the wildlife area, as well as a park area (west and south of Tillman) and the golf course, requiring pedestrians to walk a significant distance to reach a safe crosswalk. Balboa and Burbank Boulevards are also busy, multi-lane roads with few or no designated safe pedestrian crossings. At the east end of the Basin, a pedestrian underpass has been constructed beneath Burbank Boulevard. This allows safe pedestrian passage from one part of the Wildlife Area to another. Additional underpasses or bridges could be constructed to improve pedestrian movement within the Basin.

Wildlife Corridors and Connectivity

Corridors are important to consider in the overall ecological health of a habitat. In particular, the Sepulveda Dam Basin Wildlife Area and the Los Angeles River reach within the Basin is the last relatively natural habitat available in the area. Steps to improve connectivity of these habitats could improve overall wildlife diversity and abundance in the area.

The nearest area of non-urbanized, relatively natural habitat to Sepulveda Dam Basin is in Topanga State Park, southwest of the Basin, a part of the Santa Monica Mountains. The California State Parks Departments (CSPD 2009) identifies the area as a significant wildland. However, there are no corridors of connectivity available to terrestrial or aquatic species between Topanga State Park and the Basin. It is possible that birds and bats may pass between the two areas, though no specific data are available regarding migration between the two areas.

Movement of wildlife between two areas varies by species and each species may require differing corridor characteristics. Spencer (2005) defines two types of barriers; a barrier that is impassable under any circumstances for a particular species, and a filter barrier, which may be utilized by a species under some circumstances. For example, most small ground-dwelling species such as amphibians, reptiles, and small mammals will not pass or are reluctant to pass over a busy roadway, retaining walls, a large area with no vegetation, fences, or other physical barriers or through filters, and are therefore less mobile than other species (Spencer 2005). Fish barriers include low or no stream-flow, culverts, dams, concrete channels, felled trees and other natural and man-made obstacles. Large mammals and birds are less sensitive to barriers.

Both barriers and filters are present throughout the Basin. Several major roadways pass through the Basin, including Balboa Boulevard, Burbank Boulevard, and Woodley Avenue and discourage unimpeded movement throughout the Basin for most species, except birds and bats. Areas of development and recreation are also significant barriers to many species.

Though it is disturbed, the wildlife area is the only area within the urbanized section of the San Fernando Valley that is specifically designated and managed for wildlife habitat. Even throughout this area there are significant barriers to wildlife passage. **Woodley Avenue and Burbank Boulevard both bisect the natural areas of the Basin** effectively restricting movement of small, ground-dwelling species and endangering the movement of larger mammals in the area. A tunnel has been constructed beneath Burbank Boulevard to extend the trail system throughout the Basin and it is possible that larger mammals utilize this tunnel for passage, though no data is

available. In some cases, individual animals develop less sensitivity to development and pass through urbanized areas relatively freely. Raccoons, opossums, and coyotes are several of the species that are often seen crossing roadways and utilizing areas frequented by humans.

The Los Angeles River also offers a relatively large expanse of habitat, though highly disturbed that extends from the Dam embankment, under Balboa Boulevard to the bus-way at the west end of the Basin. The soft bottom throughout this stretch is unique to the river. Five tributaries of the Los Angeles River, Haskell, Hayvenhurst, Woodley, Bull and Encino Creeks flow through the Basin into the Los Angeles River.

Maintenance

A major constraint to new or modified amenities within the Basin can be the resources needed for adequate maintenance. During economic downturns when municipal revenues are reduced, City recreation department budgets may be reduced; when budgets are adequate, finding and employing trained staff may be the challenge. Compounding this problem for recreation managers is that often bonds are passed and grant funding is made available for capital improvements, but ongoing maintenance funding is not included and additional recreation amenities may stretch existing park maintenance resources.

Due to decreased City budgets some maintenance has been reduced, such as frequency of cleaning and restocking of restrooms. At Lake Balboa, paddleboats, once available for rent are no longer available due to the unsafe condition of the dock to handle large groups of people.

When new amenities are proposed additional maintenance resources should be identified at the outset. If resources cannot be expanded to meet the additional needs, fees or volunteer services may be a way to fill these resource gaps.

5 RESOURCE OBJECTIVES

5.1 Resource Management

Resource management is moving towards an integrated ecological approach, as demonstrated by the changing guidance of the Federal government. In urbanized areas such as southern California, ecosystems and their various habitat communities have become severely restricted. With the surrounding environment so drastically altered, biodiversity (species richness) is reduced and landscape linkages are broken. Conservation and restoration require a redefined planning process. A Corps Master Plan must reflect the most current advances in restoration ecology and wildlife management in the context of the Corps mission, regulations, and guidance.

Science recognizes the need for habitat connectivity so that wildlife not only has the necessary space to roam, but also has genetic diversity to ensure that an “island effect” on species is not inadvertently created on remnant habitat lands. With species increasingly endangered or of special concern, objectives must consider habitat that is needed for species most at risk given current conditions at the Basin. Objectives must also anticipate changes that may alter this scenario in the future. Effective adaptive management techniques need to respond to current conditions as well as an unknown future. The following Resource Objectives are common to all land use classifications and incorporate the principles of Flood Risk Management, Safety and Security, Environmental Quality and Character, Connectivity, and Community Involvement,

5.2 Resource Objectives

Resource objectives are based on the input from stakeholders as well as Corps’ guidance. Resource objectives apply to all lands managed by the Corps.

5.2.1 Flood Risk Management

The primary Project purpose is flood risk management as authorized by the 1936 Flood Control Act. Flood risk management is the process of identifying, evaluating, selecting, implementing and monitoring actions to mitigate levels of risk. Flood risk management cannot be compromised and the resource objectives for flood risk management apply to all land use classifications. Project Operations land are managed by the Corps for operations and maintenance of the Project including the Dam embankment, outlet works, spillway, access roads, and other needs associated with Project operations. The public may not be cognizant of the importance of the role the Basin plays in flood risk management.

Resource Objectives

- Educate the public and stakeholders on flood risk awareness and safety issues.
- Promote installation of signage and interpretation to educate the public about the role of the Basin in flood risk management.

- Ensure that future land use proposals and activities are compatible with estimated levels and frequency of inundation, to ensure that the Dam can be operated without constraints that compromise downstream flood risk reduction.

Resources: EO 11988, ER 1165-2-26, ER 1110-2-240, ER 1130-2-530, EP 310-1-6a, CESP R 1110-2-1.

5.2.2 Safety and Security

Safety includes not just safety from flood risk, but also physical safety while visiting the Basin. The ability to survey one's surroundings and comprehend potential threats, the ability to leave an area in immediate danger, and report such events to authorities is critical to optimizing the visitor's experience. All land uses within the Basin should provide means of communication and implement education of safety and security measures.

Resource Objectives

- Educate the public and stakeholders on flood risk awareness and safety issues.
- Ensure that infrastructure is properly maintained to avoid creating a public hazard.
- Provide means for visitors and emergency personnel to communicate quickly their specific location in the Basin.
- Safety features such as fencing, lighting, warning signs, and call boxes installed where needed and maintained.
- Maintain adequate patrols for safety.
- Manage vegetation for user safety and security.
- Design of amenities so that vandalism and other "illegal activities" are discouraged.
- Maintain a Basin safety plan that ensures that restricted areas, danger zones, and hazardous areas are clearly marked and if necessary, barricaded and closed.

Resources: EP 1130-2-550, EM 385-1-1.

5.2.3 Environmentally Quality

Environmental quality refers to the integrity and value of natural resources including land, water, air, noise, aesthetic, biological, and cultural resources. The conservation, preservation, and restoration of environmental resources are recognized as important to human welfare and quality of life. Through environmental legislation, Congress has indicated that protection and enrichment of environmental quality is in the public interest.

With increased urbanization throughout southern California, natural resources have become increasingly limited. The Basin provides a large open space within a densely populated urban area. Within the Basin, important natural habitats provide refuge for endangered species and species of special concern. Where practicable, these habitats should be managed or restored for protection and conservation of the species. Environmentally Sensitive land use classified areas

have the highest protection of resources due to either the nature of the habitat or the cultural resources on the site

The impacts of climate change expected during this century will impact storm and flooding frequency and duration, availability and quality of water, wild fires, ecosystem functions, and energy production and demand. To minimize future impacts, stakeholders must be ready to develop, implement, and assess adjustments or changes in operations and maintenance to enhance resilience or reduce vulnerability to systems and programs.

The use of energy is a key component of sustainability in reducing the impacts of climate change. Energy saving measures should be implemented and new development constructed in accordance with green building principles.

With its rich diversity of natural resources and functioning ecosystems, the Basin provides unique opportunities for children and adults to learn about natural systems. With education comes appreciation and understanding of the importance of these lands and the need to preserve and protect them for generations to come.

Resource Objectives

- Encourage uses, activities, management practices, and future development that conserve natural and cultural resources.
- Preserve areas containing unique, sensitive and/or significant resources to minimize disturbance so the integrity and values will not be adversely impacted by other uses, management practices, or developments within the Basin.
- Discourage uses in natural lands or open spaces that deteriorate environmental quality and provide environmental compensation for land uses that adversely affect the natural resources of an area that cannot be prevented.
- Design site, operation of facilities, and activities to avoid or minimize adverse environmental impacts per Corps' guidelines and design criteria.
- Promote use of appropriate native plant palettes in new landscaping or when rehabilitating established landscaped areas to maximize biodiversity and reduce soil erosion.
- Preserve areas of vegetation that have a cultural and/or social significance.
- Minimize conflicts between land uses, activities, and developments through buffering, screening, and other measures
- Promote land uses and activities that minimize impacts to global climate change.
- Use adaptive management to respond to changing conditions due to climate change.
- Encourage use of reclaimed water for irrigation of recreation amenities.
- Promote traffic plans that would minimize generating pollution within the Basin
- Encourage new development to be consistent with green building principles.
- Encourage sustainable design.
- Encourage new buildings achieve a Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED®) Silver or higher rating.\
- Determine suitability of natural areas for either wildlife habitat or recreation before changing land use classifications.

Resources North American Wetlands Protection Act, Aesthetic and Scenic Quality § 232 of WRDA 1996, Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act as amended, Clean Air Act, Noise Control Act, Clean Water Act, Environmental and Economic Benefits of Landscape Practices on Federal Landscaped Grounds, EO 13186 Federal Responsibilities to Protect Migratory Bird Act, EO on Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy and Economic Performance, ER 1130-2-540.

5.2.4 Recreation

ER 1130-2-550 states that the primary rationale for any future recreation development must be dependent on a project's natural or other resources. Previously approved development plans for land currently outgranted for recreation are grandfathered under this policy.

There is a critical shortage of open space within urbanized southern California. The goal is to provide quality recreation experiences including an accessible, safe and healthful environment, a diversity of recreation opportunities for a diverse cultural community, and maintain a harmonious balance between the natural resources of the Basin and the community's needs and desires.

Resource Objectives

- Encourage community participation in expressing needs and desires to identify future development proposals.
- Optimize design of recreation amenities and access to minimize conflicts between activities and natural resources.
- Respect landscapes of significant and/or cultural value.

Resources 16USC 460d, ER 1165-2-550, EP 1165-2-550

5.2.5 Connectivity

Connect the Basin to the surrounding landscape to facilitate the movement of people that minimizes environmental degradation. The movement of people in, out, and around the Basin must be considered in light of various modes of transportation, individual mobility, the need for safety and to quickly evacuate during a flood event.

Resource Objectives

- Encourage identification and connection with regional trail systems and eliminate impediments to trail connections within the Basin.
- Promote safe and efficient circulation and access to the Basin's recreation facilities to control traffic and provide a link between activities within the Basin.
- Minimize impacts on natural resources by locating similar amenities near vehicular access points.

Resources: National Trail Systems Act (NTSA), Trails for America in the 21st Century Act (16 USC 1245).

5.2.6 **Ecosystem Restoration**

Natural creeks are an integral wildlife corridor within the region. Within the Basin several tributaries of the Los Angeles River carry local run-off through the Basin to the river. With urbanization these creeks have become degraded, reducing wildlife connectivity, losing habitat value, and reducing water quality.

Resource Objectives

- Encourage the restoration of creeks and streams for safe corridors for wildlife movement.
- Restore wildlife habitat diversity and value.

Resources: North American Wetlands Protection Act, Endangered Species Act, EO 13186 Federal Responsibilities to Protect Migratory Bird Act,

5.2.7 **Cultural Resources**

Cultural resources need to be protected yet balanced against the educational goals of interpretation of sites. Nature centers and interpretative panels can safely display artifacts and interpret the history of a site.

Resource Objectives

- Promote preservation and protection of historic and cultural sites within the Basin.
- Encourage education and interpretation aspects of cultural sites

Resources National Historic Preservation Act, Archeological Resources Preservation Act as amended.

5.2.8 **Community Involvement**

Encourage the local community to become partners with the lessees and the Corps as Basin stewards. Creating a sense of ownership empowers the local community to play an active role in future development by indentifying problems, participating in volunteer programs, identifying and protecting resources, and educating the general public about these resources.

Resource Objectives

- Volunteer programs for education and interpretation, clean-up and restoration activities, and safe accessibility of the Basin.

- Maintain communication channels among Basin users, lessees, and the Corps on the public's needs and desires, future development, and problems and opportunities within the Basin.

Resources: NEPA (42 USC 4321 et seq.), EP 1130-2-550.

6 LAND USE CLASSIFICATION AND RESOURCE PLAN RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Recommended Land Use Classifications

The recommended land use classifications proposed in this Master Plan include: Project Operations, Recreation, Environmentally Sensitive, and Multiple Resource Management - Recreation - Low Density, Multiple Resource Management - Vegetative Management, and Multiple Resource Management - Inactive and/or Future Recreation.

Nationwide regulations and policies are outlined in Chapter 16, ER 1130-2-550 and the “Non-Recreation Outgrant Policy.” The South Pacific Division of the Corps issued SPD Regulation 1110-2-1, “Land Development Proposals at Corps Reservoir Projects,” to clarify acceptable guidelines for development proposals. The Corps has prepared additional guidance regarding appropriate uses within each land use classification. This guidance is intended to clarify to the stakeholders and the public what activities/events are compatible with resource goals and objectives described in Section 5 and in accordance with Corps guidance and regulations on outgranted lands.

Maps 24 and 25 illustrate recreational and restoration opportunities and are discussed below in the Environmentally Sensitive and Inactive and/or Future Recreation classifications.

6.2 Recommended Actions Applicable to All Land Use Classifications

A number of recommended actions are applicable to all land use classifications. These include:

- **Improve condition of existing trails and create new trails where appropriate. Improvement of hiking and other designated use trails in conjunction with restoration measures would increase public access and awareness of biological and other natural resources in the Basin. These improvements should incorporate ecosystem restoration efforts and appropriate design and management to enhance visitors’ experiences while not compromising the greater ecosystem.**
- **Implement policy of landscaping with native plants.** Identify a plant palette of indigenous native plants to use in landscaping new recreation areas, and replace non-native plant material with native plants over time, except where provided in association with a specific cultural, historical or recreational experience.
- **Eradicate invasive exotic species,** including but not limited to giant reed (*Arundo donax*), consistent with nationwide policy (EO 13112). Educate the public on the significance of the need for eradication and how action would substantially enhance the natural environment throughout the Basin.
- Through an Adaptive Habitat Management Plan (AHMP) an invasive species eradication program should be implemented to restore native plant communities. Through the AHMP

- process with interested stakeholders, create a short term and long –range plan for plant replacement that seamlessly integrates native plants over time in the existing landscape.
- Institute a system of way-finding using Corps signage guidelines (EP 310-1-6a, 01Jun 06) to ensure the public and emergency personnel are able to easily navigate the Basin. Combine a system of GPS with trail markers to positively identify locations in the Basin.
 - Create signs to be placed throughout the Basin that identifies current locations of visitors as well as other amenities in the Basin.
 - Indicate on signs where park personnel can be reached in case of emergencies.
 - Install signs that indicate length and physical difficulty of trails and estimated walking/hiking times.
 - Institute sustainable resource management practices consistent with those already instated by the City.
 - Continue green waste management policies for recycling of lawn clippings, shrub and tree trimmings and green debris, either on site or for composting off site.
 - Implement additional “smart irrigation” systems throughout the Basin with satellite-operated controllers that monitor weather conditions and adjust irrigation schedules accordingly. Create an education program to demonstrate how this can be adapted for residential landscapes.
 - Regularly evaluate the salinity of soils irrigated with recycled water and balance soil amendment practices to sustain habitat or landscape value.
 - Develop a program to manage and recycle construction waste and provide incentives and recognition for lessees and contractors who adopt it per EO 13514.
 - Retrofit pavement projects with the use of porous pavement alternatives where appropriate to allow for the infiltration of storm-water.
 - Develop an Integrated Pest Management program that uses alternatives to chemical fertilizers and pesticides.
 - Use low voltage solar lighting where feasible.

6.2.1 Recommended Areas Applicable to Project Operations

Land classified as Project Operations covers 313.0 acres, including 157.8 acres of roadways within the Basin. Project Operations land is the most restrictive land use classification. It is managed by the Corps for operations and maintenance of the Project. While vegetation or trails may be permitted within Project Operations areas, vegetation may need to be cleared out periodically to maintain flood storage capacity, trails may need to be closed off quickly in the event of eminent flooding, and trails may be closed following a storm event due to damage caused by inundation.

6.2.2 Recommended Areas Applicable to Recreation

Recreation includes a total of 234.6 acres. The land use classification of Recreation is the most flexible or developable classification. This classification allows for amenities such as sports fields and associated support amenities. Recreation areas are generally located in the higher elevations of the Basin as Corps policy restricts certain kinds of structures within given flood-line elevations or they must be mitigated for by being floodable. Requests for development for non-recreational purposes must be evaluated on a site specific basis for compatibility.

Existing recreation areas included in this classification include:

- Balboa Sports Complex
- Hjelte Sports Center
- The Encino Franklin Fields and Velodrome
- Pedlow Field Skate Park
- White Oak Fields

Currently under construction is the Phase I of the Sepulveda Basin Sports Complex, including ball-fields, parking, and restrooms. Approved by the Corps is the Phase II of the complex, located on the “east bowtie” area bounded by the Orange Line Bus-way to the north and Los Angeles River to the south.

In addition, the City is currently planning:

- Approved, but not completely funded, a Universally Accessible Baseball Field located in the southeastern corner of Anthony C. Beilenson Park at the intersection of the Los Angeles River and Hayvenhurst Channel.

6.2.3 Recommended Areas Applicable to Environmentally Sensitive

Approximately 300 acres is recommended for classification into the Environmentally Sensitive classification. This is the most restrictive land use classification in terms of development and use opportunities. This classification places a strong emphasis on the protection and/or preservation of vegetation, wildlife, and cultural resources. This classification includes Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area, the area south of Burbank Blvd., north of the Los Angeles River, and the Bull Creek Restoration Area.

The Wildlife Area is home to a number of species including ducks, coots, great blue herons, egrets and cormorants. The endangered least Bells’ vireo has been documented at the edge of this area and along the Los Angeles River (see Map 21). This classification severely restricts activities and use of these areas. It would provide a high level of protection of the areas to preserve the habitat value for resident species, is compatible with Corps environmental stewardship policies, and reflects community desires for protection of wildlife habitat. Activities such as hiking, bird watching, volunteer clean-up activities, and still photography are permitted under Corps’ guidance.

Recommendations include:

- **Restoration of upland and riparian communities** would increase the overall quality of these areas for wildlife habitat.
- Conduct **periodic biological site surveys** to monitor the presence of any rare or endangered species such as the least Bell’s vireo.
- **Dogs and other domesticated animals are not allowed, on or off trail.**

- Fishing, boating and swimming in the Wildlife Area Lake and in Bull Creek are not allowed.
- Prepare a management plan for long –term invasive plant eradication.
- Restore unofficial trails that have become compacted and devoid of vegetation.
- Promote safety in isolated areas by
 - a. Docent led tours and patrols to keep a constant presence in the area.
 - b. Signs posted describing the inherent dangers of potential flooding in these areas.
 - c. Planting “unfriendly” but appropriate native riverine plants such as native roses (*Rosa californica*) at entry points into the areas with appropriate warning signs and plant identification.
 - d. Periodic but irregular “sweeps” by enforcement personnel to remove encampments and direct people out of the area. Such sweeps cannot be reliably predicted, but if occur frequently enough, the likelihood of people immediately returning is diminished.
 - e. Vegetation management as required includes trimming and clearing/mowing for user safety and security.
- The extent and area of lands included within each proposed land use classification are described, including total acreage and lands proposed for new classifications are mapped in Appendix E Map 23; and
- A description of Corps policy and guidance appropriate for each land use classification has been provided to guide appropriate designation and future development and management of the lands.

6.2.4 Recommended Areas Applicable to Multiple Resource Management (MRM) - Recreation - Low Density

Approximately 801 acres is recommended for the MRM - Recreation - Low Density land use classification. MRM - Recreation - Low Density recognizes areas that have less intensive recreational uses such as picnic areas, open play areas, and golf courses. Areas designated as MRM – Recreation- Low Density are better suited to hosting special events because development is limited and open space in these areas can suit multiple use and function. Special events at Sepulveda Basin are preferred to occur in Woodley Park and the north side of Lake Balboa. Other areas classified as MRM - Recreation -Low Density may be considered on a case-by-case basis and must be compatible with the surrounding area to limit impacts to adjacent areas. Special events must comply with guidelines established by the Corps included in Appendix A5.

The following areas are recommended for this classification because of their current low intensity recreational use:

- Woodley Lakes Municipal Golf Course
- Balboa Municipal Golf Course
- Encino Municipal Golf Course
- Anthony C. Beilenson Park with the exception of the Bull Creek Restoration Area and the approved universal access baseball field
- Woodley Park

- Cricket Fields
- Sepulveda Garden Center and community garden plots
- Off-leash Dog Park
- Archery Range
- Model Airplane Field
- ONEgeneration S. Mark Taper Intergenerational Center

Because this classification covers such a large area, recommendations are specific to each of the different parcels and will be addressed individually.

Woodley Lakes, Encino, and Balboa Municipal Golf Courses Corps policy now expressly prohibits golf courses when developing new recreation amenities on Federal lands controlled by the Corps. Existing golf amenities are permitted to remain. Existing golf courses are subject to environmental stewardship policies. The City has taken several steps to institute sustainable practices into the management of its courses. These practices include:

- Use of reclaimed water
- Smart irrigation
- Mulching lawnmowers that keep grass clippings in place
- Composting
- Decreased use of fertilizer
- Keeping herbicides and pesticides to a minimum and using the least toxic material (such as *Bacillus thuriengensis* or Bt).

In addition, it is recommended that storm-water BMPs should be instituted throughout the golf courses to address runoff which may contain chemical fertilizers, pesticide and herbicides.

Anthony C. Beilenson Park This park includes Lake Balboa, restroom amenities, shade structures, and a very popular universal access playground. A universal access baseball field is under development. Special events are frequently held in this area. Special events sometimes encroach upon and close down access to restrooms and the universal playground.

- The Bull Creek restoration area needs to be “off limits” to heavy use such as 5K and 10K runs.
- The path around Bull Creek should continue its loop.

Special events are permitted within Anthony Beilenson Park in accordance with the conditions and restrictions provided in Appendix A5. The following recommendations for this area include

- Instituting an educational program that informs the public about the disadvantages to wildlife when fed by people. Increase interpretive signage around the lake, provide brochures at the restroom amenities, and enhancing educational opportunities through community outreach, park entrances, and lectures.
- Placing signs in multiple languages informing the public that fishing line disposal containers are on site for public use.

- Monitoring parking capacity and if necessary, posting signs when parking lots are full.

Woodley Park It is recommended that this area be targeted for replacement of non- native trees and shrubs with native trees and shrubs over time.

Cricket Fields These are long-established uses at the Basin and attract a very diverse user group. It is recommended that these continue to operate and maintained.

The Japanese Garden at the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant This garden has a high esthetic value. A strong docent and support group coupled with a nominal user fee allows the garden maintained at its current level. It is recommended that the cultural landscapes be maintained.

Sepulveda Garden Center The City has indicated a desire to add an additional restroom facility in the area south of Magnolia Boulevard. It is recommended that the area northwest of the current community garden center be considered for expansion of the garden center.

Sepulveda Basin Off-leash Dog Park As one of the more popular sites at the Basin, it is recommended that improvements include: providing for chairs and/or picnic tables for users of the park. With its location adjacent to the Los Angeles River (River) which does not currently meet bacteria water quality standards, it is recommended that Best Management Practices (BMPs) such as vegetated swales be installed to ensure that no animal waste is entering the River and degrading the water quality.

Archery Range This area is recommended for additional maintenance, specifically to restroom facilities.

Model Airplane Field There is a very strong, active and vocal user group that self-polices its activities and helps maintain the site. There are no recommendations at this time.

ONEgeneration S. Mark Taper Intergenerational Center This facility has evolved from its original use as a teen center into one that accommodates many generations and is a “cooling center” for those in the San Fernando Valley without air conditioning. While an unusual use at a Corps facility, it serves a diverse population. It is recommended that the use and maintenance of the facility be reviewed periodically to ensure that it is still meeting the needs of the community.

6.2.6 Recommended Areas Applicable to **Multiple Resource Management - Vegetative Management**

Approximately 218 acres is recommended for classification as Vegetative Management. The Vegetative Management classification is less restrictive than the Environmentally Sensitive land use classification, but recognized as having environmental value for the vegetation provided. These areas may include non-native plants and/or be subject to disturbance from time to time. Because of the proximity to the model airplane field, the area between Woodley Creek and Woodley Avenue is subject to trampling when fliers retrieve downed planes and may burn if a plane crashes and catches on fire. The areas recommended for this land use classification and shown on **Map 23** are:

- The area adjacent to the model airplane field roughly bounded by Woodley Creek to the north and west, Woodley Avenue to the east, and the Los Angeles River and Burbank Boulevard to the south.
- A buffer zone around the Los Angeles River and its tributaries in the Basin: Bull Creek, Hayvenhurst Channel, Woodley Creek, Haskell Creek, and Encino Creek.
- Area located south of Burbank Blvd., west of the Dam, and north of the Los Angeles River.

Lands adjacent to the Los Angeles River and its tributaries are recognized as areas for potential restoration activities by stakeholders and the Corps. Riparian buffers, defined here as the entirety of aquatic, wetland, and riparian forest woodland habitat within the river can reduce runoff rates by increasing flow complexity and travel.

Recommendation for this classification as all land use classifications, to implement a native planting program where feasible.

Recommendations include:

- Restoration of upland and riparian communities would increase the overall quality of these areas for wildlife habitat.
- Conduct periodic biological site surveys to monitor the presence of any rare or endangered species such as the least Bell's vireo.
- Dogs and other domesticated animals are not allowed, on or off trail.
- Prepare a management plan for long-term invasive plant eradication.
- Promote safety in isolated areas by
 - a. Signs posted describing the inherent dangers of potential flooding in these areas.
 - b. Planting "unfriendly" but appropriate native riverine plants such as native roses (*Rosa californica*) at entry points into the areas with appropriate warning signs and plant identification.
 - c. Periodic but irregular "sweeps" by enforcement personnel to reduce "illegal activities", remove encampments, and direct people out of the area. Such sweeps cannot be reliably predicted, but if occur frequently enough, the likelihood of people immediately returning is diminished.
 - d. Vegetation management as required includes trimming and clearing/mowing for user safety and security.
- The extent and area of lands included within each proposed land use classification are described, including total acreage and lands proposed for new classifications are mapped in Appendix E Map 23; and
- A description of Corps policy and guidance appropriate for each land use classification has been provided to guide appropriate designation and future development and management of the lands.

6.2.7 Recommended Areas Applicable to Multiple Resource Management - Inactive and/or Future Recreation

A total of 325.0 acres are recommended for the classification Inactive and/or Future Recreation Use. Inactive and/or Future Recreation areas include those areas that are used for non-recreational purposes; are not presently developed (including dirt lots for overflow parking) or that are being utilized on an interim basis for a limited purpose such as for agriculture. The areas recommended for this classification and shown on Map 24 include:

- An area colloquially referred to as the “west bowtie,” which consists of a roughly triangular parcel created west of the intersection of the Orange Line Bus-way and Los Angeles River currently used for agriculture.
- A small area behind the intergenerational center.
- A vacant lot north of Woodley Lakes Municipal Golf Course that extends to the area between the Recreation and Parks Administration Building and the 6th Army site.
- The areas east and west of Hjelte Sports Center currently used for agriculture.
- A small parcel west and north of the community gardens.

A number of non-Corps amenities operate in the Basin including the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant, Army National Guard Armory, Armed Forces Center, 6th Army, Air National Guard, and the City of Los Angeles Fire Station. If in the future, the Corps expands the categories of land use classifications, these areas may fall under a more appropriate classification.

Careful consideration should be given to how lands classified as MRM - Inactive and/or Future Recreation are developed. Once a capital investment has been made and a user group for that recreational activity has been established, a change to the use of the land to another land use classification or type of recreation can be difficult.

“West Bowtie” Area. While adjacent to ball fields, it is bounded by residential properties whose backyards directly abut the property. It is recommended that if agriculture is no longer desired as an interim use, that this area could be developed:

- As a passive nature park with access by bicycling or walking, planted with native trees with open spaces for informal activities and picnicking.
- As upland habitat similar to the wildlife area with hiking trails.

Area behind the ONEgeneration S. Mark Taper Intergenerational Center (Center) With the program of utilizing this area for interaction between generations, this theme could be extended and landscaped in such a way that would complement the activities of the Center. Highly active recreation with its accompanying noise and traffic would not be suitable for this area since it might disturb the people utilizing the Center. This could be developed as:

- A community garden for the people utilizing the Center and providing the Center with fresh fruits and vegetables.
- A picnic area and garden for quiet leisurely activities such as reading or chess.

- An outdoor classroom.

Areas east and west of Hjelte Sports Center currently used for agriculture. The City has indicated a desire to expand the Hjelte Sports Center to the west and utilize this area currently in agriculture for development of softball fields. It is recommended that future development plans undergo site specific evaluation and review per Corps guidance.

The area east of the existing Hjelte Sports Center is recommended to remain as agriculture for an indefinite period of time.

The parcel west and north of the community gardens appears to be abandoned or used for chipping vegetation. If this function can be performed elsewhere, the community gardens could be expanded into this area and served by the amenities at the Sepulveda Garden Center on Magnolia Boulevard.

6.3 Timeline of Resource Plan Recommendations

The tables below summarize the recommendations discussed above in Section 6.3 according to their timeline for implementation. Table 6.1 identifies the plans that are currently approved for implementation at Sepulveda Basin.

Table 6.1 Development or Expansions Approved for Implementation		
Project	Location	Description
Universally Accessible Baseball Field	In Anthony C. Beilenson Park at intersection of the Los Angeles River and Hayvenhurst Channel	Source of funding has delayed implementation.

Table 6.2 Recommended Actions for Improvement and Management Throughout Basin	
Recommended Immediate Measures	
Trail Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve hiking trails and other low-density recreational features in conjunction with restoration management measures to increase accessibility to the public and facilitate more awareness of the biological resources found in the Basin. • Connect trails to create loops and facilitate movement throughout Basin. • Decommission disturbed trails and unofficial trails created by Basin visitors. • Structure trails to discourage homeless encampments.
Native Plant Landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institute invasive plant eradication program for species such as giant reed, tree tobacco, castor bean, salt cedar in conjunction with the AHMP. • Develop a plant palette for replacing non-natives with native species.

Table 6.2 Recommended Actions for Improvement and Management Throughout Basin	
Install Way-finding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a system of signage throughout the Basin that enables visitors to identify their location as well as other amenities in the Basin. Indicate on signs location of park personnel in case of emergencies, as well as emergency phone numbers. • Where practicable, install signs that indicate length and physical difficulty of trails and estimated walking/hiking times. • Combine a system of GPS with trail markers to identify locations.
Restore Creek Drainages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eradicate non-native species from riparian habitats and implement restoration program. • Re-design eroded slope banks to allow establishment of native species and curtail erosion. • Introduce meanders, boulders, or other stream features as appropriate to increase habitat value. • Remove trash and debris.
Implement Sustainable Resources Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue green waste management. • Implement “smart irrigation” systems throughout the Basin. Implement landscape-based storm-water management systems. • Naturalize creek edges. • Develop an Integrated Pest Management program. • Use low voltage solar lighting and other energy saving utilities and measures. • Manage special events to ensure no inappropriate use of Environmentally Sensitive and MRM - Vegetative Management Areas.
Implement Safety Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure pets are leashed at all times within Basin and install signage to remind pet owners. • Install lighting and emergency call boxes in dark or isolated areas. • Implement parking lot closure procedure for busy summer or holiday periods. • Investigate options for increasing safety within the model airplane field.
Recommended Future Actions for Each Land Classification	
Project Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include education about flood risk management and the operations of the Dam in interpretive signage throughout Basin. • Manage trails and vegetation for elimination of homeless camps.
Environmentally Sensitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include education about flood risk management and the operations of the Dam in interpretive signage throughout Basin. • Restore native habitat, including upland, riparian, and wetland. • Conduct periodic biological surveys, particularly to determine of ESA protected species. • Manage trails and vegetation to limit homeless camps. • Install signage with educational information regarding the hazards of feeding wildlife.

Table 6.2 Recommended Actions for Improvement and Management Throughout Basin	
MRM - Recreation - Low Density	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement stormwater BMPs throughout golf courses and within the off-leash dog park. • Install signage with educational information regarding the hazards of feeding wildlife and encouraging proper disposal of fishing line around Balboa Lake. • Address heavily compacted soils within Woodley Park. • Investigate condition of archery range and potential improvements needed or alternative uses. • Periodically review ONEgeneration, and other amenities, to determine visitation, condition, and adequacy of meeting the community’s needs.
MRM - Vegetative Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eradicate non-native and invasive species. • Develop native plant palette for restoration plan implementation • Create appropriate riparian vegetation communities along Los Angeles River and associated drainages within Basin.
MRM – Inactive and/or Future Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate potential use opportunities in areas of inactive or agricultural land.
Potential Opportunities for Inactive or Future Recreation Areas	
West Bowtie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create passive nature park, accessed via foot or bicycle. • Restore native river adjacent upland habitat. • Create wetlands/riparian habitat.
Behind ONEgeneration Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish community garden. • Create picnic area and garden. • Designate for use as outdoor classroom.
Vacant Lot north of Woodley Lakes Municipal Golf Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install universal access playgrounds, parks, and picnic areas. • Add formalized overflow parking amenities.
West of Hjelte Sports Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A conceptual plan for several soccer fields has been approved for expansion of Hjelte Sports Center to the west.
Parcel northwest of Community Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand community gardens into this open parcel.

6.4 Economic Feasibility

Economic feasibility involves demonstrating the economic value of implementing recreation development plans that are sustainable over time in terms of public needs and desires, use and perception, and operation and maintenance. It is recognized that well maintained recreation amenities are well used and those that are not have little interest from the public and are often considered unclean and/or unsafe and decline further. When this happens, it often costs more to

refurbish and rehabilitate amenities or implement new ones than providing a carefully constructed operations and maintenance program.

While no specific plans are considered under this updated Master Plan, future plans proposed for recreation development are guided by Corps policies and guidelines for demonstrating the need and economic feasibility of such proposals. This includes documenting financial capability on the part of the proponent, sufficient funding to complete the proposal, as well as long term operation, maintenance, and repair. The proponent must also show the economic need for the project by providing market survey information to indicate community desire and the need for the project to indicate its future community use and intrinsic value.

If a proponent is not able to provide funding through normal budgetary means to maintain quality and use to a safe and clean standard, funds for operation and maintenance may need to be found elsewhere. This may involve the charging of use fees for certain activities such as ball fields, group reservations and special events (fees are subject to District Commander approval). Other sources include state and local funding sources, trusts, and private organizations to help defray costs. Public volunteer programs to staff amenities such as nature areas and visitor center could be pursued.

7

CONCLUSION

The Federal government owns and the Corps manages eleven Basins in southern California with the primary purpose of flood risk management. Since the Basins are “dry” most of the year, holding water only after storm events occur (usually December through March), the Basin may also be used for other purposes, primarily recreation that may not impede Project operations. Over sixty (60) years of Federal laws and regulations have empowered the Corps to work with local interests to develop, construct, operate, and maintain recreation amenities within the Basins serving community needs.

The Corps leased to the City of Los Angeles through its Department of Recreation and Parks a significant portion of land in the Basin to the City for recreation purposes. Over the last fifty (50) years the Corps and the City have developed a variety of recreation amenities with Federal and City funds through cost sharing agreements. Amenities include ball fields, picnic areas, trails, and lakes. The City has also independently developed recreation amenities.

The Master Plan is a tool for the Corps, stakeholders, and public interests to guide future development in the Basin. Corps regulations and policies guide the development of amenities through the Master Plan. This Master Plan is an update of the last Master Plan for Sepulveda Dam Basin completed in 1981. Although Corps regulations recommend the update of a Master Plan every five (5) years, Federal funding is not always available to initiate and complete this process. As a result, this Master Plan incorporates a longer time frame into it, identifying short and long term recommendations for recreation development, amenity maintenance, restoration of native habitats, and other actions. This has been accomplished through a process which has:

- Identified existing recreation amenities and other facilities within the Basin,
- Incorporated the local community’s needs and desires for recreation development,
- Developed resource goals and objectives, and
- Developed additional policies to facilitate these goals and objectives.

As a result, this Master Plan identifies land use classifications for the Basin based on this process within the definitions of Corps regulations. This will guide interested parties for future development through years to come to preserve and protect the Nation’s lands and resources.

8

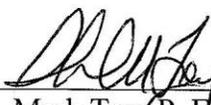
APPROVAL

I have reviewed this Master Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Sepulveda Dam Basin prepared by my staff for the guidance of future development for recreation and environmental stewardship efforts within the Sepulveda Dam Basin located in the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California in keeping with the Corps' mission, values and vision.

This Master Plan is technically sound, environmentally acceptable, and meets the appropriate requirements of Corps regulations guiding the development of Master Plans for Corps' water and land resource projects.

Therefore, I approve this Master Plan for Sepulveda Dam Basin as presented, subject to updates as needed for the benefit of flood risk management, public use, and environmental stewardship.

28 SEP 2011
Date



R. Mark Toy, P. E.
Colonel, US Army
Commander and District Engineer

**APPENDIX A5:
CORPS POLICY ON SPECIAL EVENTS
AT SEPULVEDA DAM BASIN**

1. Under Corps regulations, special events are subject to the review and approval of the Corps. At Sepulveda Dam Basin (Basin), events less than 1,000 people, subject to the restrictions included in the Master Plan, are within the authority of the City of Los Angeles as stated in paragraph 38(d) of the Lease. Events over 1,000 people are subject to specific review and approval by the District Commander.
2. Pursuant to Title 36, Section 327.21, special events are prohibited unless written permission has been granted by the District Commander. The public shall not be charged any fee by any event sponsor unless the District Commander has approved in writing the proposed schedule of fees. The District Commander shall have authority to revoke permission, require removal of any equipment, and require restoration of an area to pre-event condition, upon failure of the event sponsor to comply with terms and conditions of the permit/permission.
3. The approval of special events over 1,000 people is a “Federal action” requiring compliance with environmental laws including NEPA. Through the Environmental Assessment associated with this Master Plan, the Corps has assessed impacts associated with special events subject to the conditions and limitations below and determined the impacts are less than significant. Generally, no event-specific Environmental Assessment will be required for events that meet these conditions and limitations, after verification by the Corps.
 - a. Events must be held at one of the following locations:
 - i. Woodley Park I, Woodley Park II with parking available at the Woodley Park I and Woodley Park II parking lots or the overflow parking lot, north of the Woodley golf course
 - ii. North of Lake Balboa with parking available at the overflow parking lot, north of the Woodley golf course.
 - b. Events must be assessed on an event-specific basis.
 - c. Events may not obstruct use or access to any other area of the Basin. Recreational users of the adjacent areas may not be impeded.
 - d. Events may not exceed 5,000 people (including vendors, staff and attendees) on any given day.
 - e. Events may not exceed two days of the event plus two days (48 hours) setup and two days (48 hours) cleanup/takedown. Event areas must remain open to the public during setup and cleanup except where safety and/or logistics is/are a concern.
 - f. No stunts, pyrotechnics, weapons, firearms, fires, aircraft including helicopters, animals other than dogs, and/ or water contact is/are permitted.
 - g. Amplified sound shall not exceed 100 dBl 20 feet from the source. This is considered the equivalent of a loud auto horn at 10 feet.
 - h. No amplified sound shall be permitted after 10:00 pm Monday through Saturday, nor after 7:00 pm on Sunday.

- i. No ground disturbance (digging, leveling, etc.) of any area is permitted. No physical alteration (cutting of vegetation, moving rocks, etc.) is permitted. Relocation of placed “landscape boulders” are not included, but shall be returned to their original position at the direction of the lessee. Staking of tents is permitted, but all holes shall be re-filled and compacted at the close of the event as holes left un-treated may cause people to trip and injure themselves.
 - j. All cars shall be parked in designated parking stalls or on dirt shoulder. Cars on shoulder shall be parked parallel to the road. No vehicles may be parked on grass areas. Vehicles may be used at the site for setup and takedown only.
 - k. Cars for demonstration or exhibit shall place an oil pan beneath all vehicles when parked on the grass. All oil and fluid leaks/drips shall be cleaned up by the vehicle’s owner at the close of the event. The event proponent shall be responsible for a final inspection and clean-up of the area.
 - l. The path around Lake Balboa may not be closed off from public use at any time.
 - m. Walk/runs, marathons, races etc. must be assessed on an event-specific basis.
 - n. Car shows must be assessed on an event-specific basis.
4. Requests for events meeting the above limitations must be submitted to the Corps no less than 30 days prior to the proposed event date for review and confirmation that the event complies with applicable requirements.
5. Events not meeting the above limitations are subject to a more detailed event-specific evaluation by the Corps, including an Environmental Assessment for NEPA compliance. Requests for such events must be submitted to the Corps no less than 90 days prior to the proposed event date.
6. All Special Events, including those assessed in the Master Plan EA, must meet the following requirements:
 - a. The right to charge is subject to the event proponent providing parking assistance, adequate policing for crowd control, and other services required for the health, safety, and welfare of event participants.
 - b. The event proponent must meet bonding, insurance, and other requirements under local laws.
 - c. No costs shall accrue to the Government.
 - d. Use of Project/Basin lands will not preempt public use of project recreational resources. All other Basin areas must remain accessible to non-event Basin users.
 - e. The event proponent shall provide a plot plan showing the proposed layout of the event. A Parking Plan (including plan for disabled parking), Traffic Plan, and Evacuation Plan shall be required. No vehicles may be parked on grassy areas outside designated parking. Event proponents shall encourage the use of public transit, carpooling, and bicycling to the event. Parking limitations for the event shall be posted one week prior to the event.
 - f. Event proponents must coordinate security requirements with the City. Generally, events over 1000 people should have 1 security guard/person for each 500 people.
 - g. The site shall be fully restored to prevent conditions by the event proponent within 48 hours of event closure. The City may require a bond from the event proponent.
 - h. Events longer than four days or over holidays are generally disfavored, requiring a special exception by the District Commander.

- i. Either the City or the event proponent must submit a Post-Event Report within 30- days following the event containing the number of attendees, funds received (see collection cost analysis below), any problems encountered, any damage to the property, and any other issues of concern.
 - j. Collection of any funds in connection with the event, including for admission and parking, must be approved by the District Commander prior to the issuance of the City's permit. Collection of entry fees in excess of actual total costs will be paid to the Corps for legal disposal unless surplus proceeds are used for benefit to the project (Sepulveda Dam Basin). A collection cost analysis will be provided by the event proponent within 30 days following the event. The Corps reserves the right to audit the City's records.
 - k. Adequate public restrooms (portable) and first-aid facility (e.g., tent), as applicable, must be provided although publicly available facilities may not be closed to the public during the event.
 - l. Alcohol sales (e.g., beer and wine garden) must be licensed and comply with applicable local laws.
 - m. The event proponent is required to hold the government harmless, accept liability and provision of indemnity and insurance are required.
 - n. The Corps must have access to the special event site at all times.
 - o. At no time may the Universal Access Play Area (south of Lake Balboa) be enclosed as part of any Special Event Area.
7. Events larger than 50 persons may not be held in the Wildlife Area including the area known as Woodley Park III. At no time may the parking lot for the Wildlife Area be closed for other uses, limiting access to the Wildlife Area.
 8. Walk/runs and bicycle rides shall not enter Environmentally Sensitive Areas at any time. Paths and or trails through the Basin for the event may be closed for the time period of the event and one hour before and one hour after the event for clean-up and removal of any and all trash created during the event.
 9. Presence of animals shall be limited to exhibition purposes. All animals shall be enclosed in a secure "pen". Petting zoos shall be continuously monitored and all animal waste and excess feed shall be removed continuously. A final inspection and clean-up of the area shall be the responsibility of the event proponent.

**APPENDIX A7:
CORPS POLICY ON BIOLOGICAL SURVEYS
IN OPERATIONS AREAS**

1. Non-invasive biological surveys within recreation areas open to the public can be undertaken without additional review and approval from the Corps; survey requestors should coordinate with the lessee as appropriate.
2. Biological surveys within operations areas require a right-of-entry permit from the Corps, which is a “Federal action” requiring review under NEPA. The potential impacts associated with certain types of biological surveys within operations areas have been evaluated under the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) associated with this Master Plan and determined to be no more than minimal when the conditions below are met. All other requests for rights-of-entry to operations areas to conduct biological surveys will require a request-specific Environmental Assessment (EA).
3. Vegetation surveys (e.g., botany classes learning sampling methods, etc.):
 - a. Surveys must occur outside the breeding season (15 March - 15 August).
 - b. Surveyors may leave established trails and roads.
 - c. Surveyors may take small samples of vegetation, excluding any species subject to protection under Federal or state law.
 - d. Requestors shall provide a brief description of the proposed survey, including number of attendees, length of activity, methods, etc., for review and confirmation by the Corps that it meets the conditions above.
4. Animal species surveys:
 - a. Surveys must be non-invasive and must remain on existing trails, roads, or in open areas (no breaking new trails or creating pathways through tall vegetation).
 - b. For example, surveys may not involve banding, netting, clipping, trapping, transects that involve leaving existing roads, trails or open areas, or stratified random sampling that involves leaving existing roads, trails or open areas.
 - c. Surveys must have no effect on endangered species under the Endangered Species Act.
 - d. Surveys off trails during breeding season, such as protocol surveys or banding/trapping requires a Section 10(a)(1)(a) permit or California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) permit for listed species.
 - e. Requestors shall provide a proposal for review and confirmation by the Corps that it meets the conditions above and accepted standards for surveys.
 - f. Requests for right-of-entry must be received no less than 60-days prior to the start of the survey.
5. Following the completion of a survey, a summary report shall be sent to the Corps documenting the survey results with backup data within 90 days of the survey, prior to forwarding to other Federal or state agencies.
6. Requests for surveys that propose to meet the restrictions in one of the categories above shall provide documentation to demonstrate compliance with the restrictions along with the request no less than 30 days prior to the proposed survey activity. The Corps shall review and confirm that the request complies with the restrictions above.

7. Surveys that do not fall within one of the categories above will require a request-specific EA. The applicant should contact the Corps for detailed information on the review process including NEPA requirements. For all surveys that do not meet the conditions above (including, but not limited to, listed species surveys, surveys requiring a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or CDFG, or animal surveys that require leaving existing trails, roads and open areas or vegetation surveys within the breeding season), applicants shall submit a proposal for review by the Corps no less than 90 days prior to the proposed survey date.
8. Water sampling and similar requests generally are not dependent on access to operations areas and should be conducted in publicly accessible areas.
9. Access to operations areas for such activities will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

**APPENDIX A8:
CORPS POLICY
ON VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES**

1. One-time volunteer activities within areas normally open to the public may be undertaken without additional review and approval from the Corps and the lessee if applicable, within environmentally sensitive areas if requested no fewer than 21 days in advance under the following conditions:
 - a. Weeding and trash pick-up activities may not cause “take” of an endangered species.
 - b. If a storm event is forecast within 48-hours, all activities shall halt.
 - c. Volunteer organizations shall provide trash bags and appropriate tools for their use. All trash bags shall be removed from the area by the close of the day.
 - d. No vehicles may enter the environmentally sensitive areas except for the removal of trash bags and large debris, remaining on existing roads/paths at all times.
 - e. No water deeper than 12 inches may be entered at any time to collect trash or debris by hand.
 - f. Request shall include name of organization, insurance coverage or bond information, day or days of the activity, approximate area of activity, number of people involved, and how the trash bags will be removed, and where taken to for disposal.
 - g. A report delineating the number of trash bags removed and the final area covered shall be submitted to the Corps within 30 days.
2. Continuous trash, debris, and weeding volunteer programs shall submit a yearly request to the Corps with a description of estimated number and location of clean-up activity days, estimated number of people, and how trash will be removed from the area, and where taken to for disposal. A report delineating the number of trash bags removed, and the final area covered shall be submitted to the Corps every 60 days.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

COVER SHEET

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1-1
1.1	Project Location	1-1
1.2	Authorized Purpose.....	1-1
1.3	Need for and Objectives of This EA.....	1-2
2	PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES	2-1
2.1	Proposed Action Alternative.....	2-1
2.2	No Action Alternative.....	2-4
2.3	Alternatives Eliminated From Consideration	2-4
3	BASELINE CONDITIONS	3-1
3.1	Physical Land Resources	3-1
3.1.1	Geology.....	3-1
3.1.2	Sediment and Soils.....	3-2
3.1.3	Earthquake Faults.....	3-3
3.2	Water Resources	3-3
3.2.1	Los Angeles River Watershed	3-3
3.2.2	Hydrology	3-4
3.2.3	Dam Operation.....	3-4
3.2.4	Floodplain Management	3-4
3.2.5	Surface Water Quality.....	3-5
3.2.6	Groundwater	3-7
3.2.7	Wetlands	3-9
3.3	Air Quality	3-10
3.3.1	Regional Climate Factors.....	3-10
3.3.2	Local Climate.....	3-11
3.3.3	Regional Air Quality.....	3-11
3.3.4	Local Air Quality	3-13
3.3.5	Greenhouse Gas Emissions.....	3-14
3.3.6	Global Climate Change.....	3-15
3.4	Noise	3-17
3.4.1	Existing Noise Environment.....	3-19
3.5	Biological Resources	3-19
3.5.1	Plant Resources	3-19
3.5.2	Vegetation Communities	3-19
3.5.3	Exotic Plant Infestations	3-24
3.5.4	Animal Resources	3-24

3.5.5	Special Status Listed Species	3-25
3.5.6	Wildlife Corridors	3-26
3.6	Cultural Resources	3-26
3.6.1	Cultural Resources Within the Basin	3-27
3.7	Hazardous Materials and Wastes	3-28
3.8	Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice	3-29
3.9	Traffic and Transportation	3-30
3.10	Utilities	3-31
3.11	Aesthetics	3-32
3.12	Recreation Resources	3-34
3.13	Public Health and Safety	3-38
3.14	Sustainability	3-40
4	ALTERNATIVES IMPACTS ASSESSMENT	4-1
4.1	ImpactAnalysis By Resource Area	4-1
4.1.1	Physical Land Resources	4-1
4.1.2	Water Resources	4-3
4.1.3	Air Quality	4-6
4.1.4	Noise	4-88
4.1.5	Biological Resources	4-9
4.1.6	Cultural Resources	4-12
4.1.7	Hazardous and Toxic Waste Materials	4-14
4.1.8	Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice	4-15
4.1.9	Traffic and Transportation	4-16
4.1.10	Utilities	4-18
4.1.11	Esthetics	4-19
4.1.12	Recreation	4-21
4.1.13	Public Health and Safety	4-23
4.1.14	Sustainability	4-24
4.2	Cumulative Impacts	4-26
4.2.1	Past Actions	4-26
4.2.2	Present Conditions	4-27
4.2.3	Future Actions	4-27
5	PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, COORDINATION, AND CONSULTATION	5-29
5.1	Project Delivery Team	5-29
5.2	Agency Coordination	5-29
5.3	Institutional Involvement	5-29
5.4	Public Involvement	5-29
5.5	Community Workshops	5-30
5.6	Mailing List	5-30

6	ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS AND COMPLIANCE.....	6-1
6.1	National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 USC 4321 et seq.)	6-1
6.2	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 USC 661)	6-1
6.3	Endangered Species Act (ESA), as amended (16 USC 1531 et seq.).....	6-1
6.4	Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 USC 715- 715s)	6-2
6.5	Clean Water Act (CWA) (33 USC 1251 et seq.).....	6-2
6.6	Clean Air Act of 1970 (42 USC 7401 et seq.)	6-3
6.7	Noise Control Act of 1972, as amended (42 USC 4901 et seq.)	6-4
6.8	National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 USC 460b, 470l-470n).....	6-4
6.9	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) (42 U. S. C. 9601 et seq.)	6-5
6.10	Executive Order 11514, Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Quality, amended by Executive Order 11991, Relating to Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Quality.....	6-5
6.11	Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management	6-5
6.12	Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands	6-6
6.13	Executive Order 12088, Federal Compliance with Pollution Control Standards ...	6-7
6.14	Executive Order 12898, Environmental Justice Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations ..	6-7
6.15	Executive Order 13112, Invasive Species	6-7
6.16	Executive Order 13148, Greening the Government through Leadership in Environmental Management.....	6-8
6.17	Executive Order 13195, Trails for America in the 21 st Century.....	6-8
7	LIST OF PREPARERS.....	7-1
8	REFERENCES.....	8-1

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.3 Lake Balboa and Wildlife Area Lake NPDES Water Quality Monitoring..... 3-5
 Table 3.4 Sepulveda Basin Beneficial Uses 3-7
 Table 3.5 Sepulveda Basin TMDLs and Year Established..... 3-7
 Table 3.6 Active Groundwater Monitoring Data 3-8
 Table 3.8 Wetland Types and Acreages 3-9
 Table 3.9 Ambient Air Quality Standards for Criteria Pollutants 3-12
 Table 3.10 Ambient Air Quality in the Sepulveda Dam Basin Vicinity 3-13
 Table 3.11 Attainment Status of Criteria Pollutants 3-14
 Table 3.12 Source and Effects of Common Noise Levels 3-18
 Table 3.13 Market Area Demographics..... 3-29
 Table 3.14 Roadways and Traffic Volumes 3-30
 Table 3.15 Public Services in the Vicinity of the Sepulveda Dam Basin..... 3-39

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.3 The Three Spheres of Sustainability..... 3-41

LIST OF MAPS (APPENDIX E)

Map 1 Regional Setting 1
 Map 2 Vicinity 2
 Map 3 Project Location..... 3
 Map 4 Real Estate 4
 Map 5 Watershed 5
 Map 6 Open Space 6
 Map 7 Flood Elevation Frequency Contours 7
 Map 8 1981 Master Plan Land Use Classification..... 8
 Map 9 1995 Supplement to the 1981 Master Plan Land Use Classification Map 9
 Map 10 Existing Recreation..... 10
 Map 11 Woodley Park, Cricket Fields, Archery Range 11
 Map 12 Balboa Sports Complex 12
 Map 13 Northwest Sepulveda Amenities 13
 Map 14 Anthony C. Beilenson Park 14
 Map 15 Nearby Recreation 15
 Map 16 Existing Recreation and Flood Frequency Contours 16
 Map 17 Topography..... 17
 Map 18 Geology 18
 Map 19 Soil Infiltration Rates..... 19
 Map 20 Vegetation..... 20
 Map 21 Special Status Taxa Occurrences..... 21
 Map 22 Transportation and Trails..... 22
 Map 23 Proposed Land Use Classification..... 23

Map 24 Future Projects and Potential Opportunity Sites.....	24
Map 25 Restoration Opportunities.....	25
Map 26 Utilities	26

Existing Conditions The updated Master Plan reviews the existing conditions within and around the Basin using current and best available data. Existing resource conditions are considered Baseline Conditions which may also be consider Future-Without-Project Conditions, if No Action were implemented , although against no condition is technically static. This EA provides additional existing natural, cultural, and social resources and conditions.

Resource Objectives Corps' water and land management objectives must reflect the evolving Corps vision and mission goals . Over the past several decades, the Corps has adopted an environmentally focused approach to managing Federallands, such as the Sepulveda Dam Basin. The updated Master Plan presents resource objectives for environmentally sound and sustainable management practices. It indicates a move toward environmental stewardship and a responsibility for ensuring the sustainability of the natural resources within the Basin.

Recommended Land Use Classifications

Land use classification titles and uses from the existing Master Plan do not conform to current Corps guidance. As a result, the land use classifications at Sepulveda Dam Basin were revised to improve compatible uses and to ensure social, economic, and environmental sustainability of Basin lands. Map 23 shows the types and extents of the proposed land use classification plan.

Project Operations Project Operations lands are those necessary to enable the Corps to operate and maintain the Dam for its primary purpose of flood risk management. While limited activities may occur within this classification, its primary components are the Dam, spillway, and any areas needed for access for operation and maintenance of the Dam, and to conduct flood risk management operations; as a result, activities on this land must not interfere with flood risk management operations. Land extent and area identified under this classification have not changed since the previous Master Plan was implemented, and are not recommended for change under the updated Master Plan. The total area of operations land is 313.0 acres, which includes a total of 157.8 acres of roadways.

Recreation The Recreation land use classification allows the most intensive recreation uses and may be used for athletic fields, parking lots, restrooms and other amenities. Large special events may be held under this classification only after event-specific review in conformance with Corps policy (Appendix A5). Structures within recreation areas must be compatible with periodic flood inundation as provided in Corps guidance regarding structures within given flood surface water elevations (SPDR 1110-2-1). A total of 234.6 acres are recommended for classification into the Recreation category, reflecting a slight increase in the total acreage of Recreation land within the Basin since the 1981 Master Plan. Though the number of acres of land that is classified as Recreation has increased, the updated Master Plan does not recommend changes to existing recreation amenities. Additional areas newly proposed for classification as Recreation include Castle Park and Encino Baseball Fields.

Environmentally Sensitive Environmentally Sensitive lands may have limited or no development and uses are restricted to non-consumptive activities that have no significant adverse impacts. No agricultural or grazing uses are permitted on this land. This land use classification offers the greatest level of protection of natural resources. **Approximately 200 acres** are recommended for

classification as Environmentally Sensitive under the Action Alternative. The **Environmentally Sensitive area encompasses the current wildlife management area on the east side of the Basin, north of Burbank Boulevard south of Burbank Blvd. to the Los Angeles River, and the Bull Creek Restoration Area.** . These areas have ecological features that have been identified for additional protection, such as the presence of aquatic and wildlife habitat, and known occurrences of the Federally endangered least Bell's vireo.

Multiple Resource Management (MRM) – Recreation – Low Density In the 1981 Master Plan, the majority of the Basin was classified as Recreation – Low Intensity Use. Under the action alternative, the Basin will continue to be dominated by low density recreation areas, though the official land use classification name has been changed to MRM –Recreation – Low Density. There are a total of 801.4 acres of this land use classification within the Basin.

MRM land use classifications are those that are managed primarily for a specific use, but have other compatible and acceptable uses. MRM – Recreation – Low Density lands are primarily managed for **low-impact recreation activities, such as hiking, primitive camping, picnic areas, open play areas, and wildlife observation. However, it is also necessary to manage the area to ensure sustainability of the qualities that make it a suitable hiking, camping, picnicking, or observing area, such as the preservation of native vegetation or wildlife.**

Small but significant changes have been made to the areas designated as MRM – Recreation – Low Density. In comparison to the current Master Plan, the updated Master Plan designates two new areas under this land use classification, **including the area west of the Bull Creek restoration and a small parcel east of Haskell Creek and north of the Environmentally Sensitive area. Areas that are no longer under this land use classification include most of the land south of Burbank Boulevard and west of the Los Angeles River and the parcel of land surrounding the model airplane field, both of which have been reclassified into MRM – Vegetative Management.**

MRM – Vegetative Management This land use classification was not used in the 1981 Master Plan. These are **lands that are specifically identified for the protection and development of forest and vegetative cover, and benefit directly from the management and removal of invasive species. In the updated Master Plan, approximately 260 acres of land have been classified as MRM – Vegetative Management and includes areas along river and creek drainages in the Basin, which allows for the establishment or protection of a riparian habitat buffer.**

MRM – Inactive and/or Future Recreation This land use classification refers to lands that are not currently used for recreation, but may be designated as Recreation or MRM – Recreation – Low Density in the future. Typically, these lands are existing or fallow agricultural areas, but may also include unused land, athletic fields closed for rejuvenation, or Federally owned lands not used for flood risk management Project Operations. In the 1981 Master Plan, this land was classified as “undetermined.” The updated Master Plan includes a total of 325.0 acres of MRM – Inactive and/or Future Recreation land and includes agricultural lands along the existing busway, an expanse of unused dirt north of Woodley Creek Golf Course, and several parcels of agricultural or unused land south of Burbank Boulevard. This classification also includes the Federally owned National Guard Armory, Navy reserve training center, Air National Guard, Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant, and to the City of Los Angeles Fire Department.

Recommended Future Actions

Working together with the City, neighboring communities, Basin visitors, and other stakeholders, the Corps identified a number of measures that are desired for ongoing improvement and management of the Basin. These measures have been listed in Table 2.1 and divided into 1) actions for which there may be an immediate need, 2) measures that could be taken throughout each land use classification to improve safety and sustainability within the Basin, and 3) potential uses of lands that are currently designated as MRM – Inactive and/or Future Recreation.

The associated measures described for each action are preliminary in nature and intended only to suggest possible courses of action. In the event that any of the recommended future uses described are formally proposed for implementation, site specific review and studies in compliance with Corps regulations and guidelines would be required, including but not limited to, feasibility studies, market studies, and NEPA documentation. Although Corps' guidance recommends Master Plans be updated as regularly as every 5 years, this is often not possible.

2.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the updated Master Plan would not be approved. The 1981 Master Plan and the 1995 Supplement 1 would continue to provide the only management documents for the Basin. The 1981 Master Plan is based on outdated information regarding current recreation demand, use and availability within the region, current qualities and characteristics of the Basin, and national objectives and other state and regional goals and programs.

Land use classifications do not reflect current uses and in some cases no longer recognized as a land use classification by the Corps. The land use and resource suitability and analysis in the updated Master Plan proposes the reclassification of several acres of land in order to reflect actual uses of these lands and to improve environmental, social, and economic sustainability in the Basin. If the updated Master Plan is not approved, outdated land use classifications that do not reflect current use would remain in effect. Lands classified as Environmentally Sensitive or MRM – Vegetative Management would not benefit from the added protection and management of these lands.

Without the approval of the updated Master Plan, the Corps Master Plan goal of “providing the best possible combination of responses to regional needs, resource capabilities and suitability, and expressed public interest and desires consistent with authorized project purposes” cannot be achieved. The No Action Alternative would not meet the purpose and need of the Master Plan process.

2.3 Alternatives Eliminated From Consideration

Of the primary components of a Master Plan (Recommended Land Use Classifications, and Recommended Future Actions), only the recommended land use classifications could be divided

into multiple alternatives for analysis. The potential alternatives for land use classifications are constrained by: 1) existing development and use, 2) Corps guidance requirements, and 3) meeting the expressed desires of Basin stakeholders and facility operators

Existing development and uses identify current land uses within the Basin, and categorize land use classifications based on use and guidance (EP 1130-2-550). If an area is currently developed for athletic fields, that land must be identified as Recreation.

Under the Proposed Action, lands not currently under a specific use are designated as MRM – Inactive and/or Future Recreation and include agricultural areas which are considered an interim use. These lands could also be fallow, an overused recreation facility closed for refurbishing, or slated for future development. Lands classified as MRM – Inactive and/or Future Recreation under the updated Master Plan would remain open for development (or reclassification) in the future.

Analysis indicated where lands were overused, where adjacent uses were incompatible, or areas in need of protection were identified, existing land use classifications did not adequately represent current conditions or needs. Areas adjacent to the Los Angeles River, Bull Creek, Hayvenhurst Channel, Woodley Creek, Encino Creek, and Haskell Creek have been identified as corridors of important riparian habitat in need of restoration and protection. As a result all creeks and their riparian corridors have been classified as MRM – Vegetative Management.

3.4.1 Existing Noise Environment

Roadway vehicle traffic is the primary source of noise in and around the Sepulveda Dam Basin. The Basin is bordered by Interstate 405 on the east and by U.S. Highway 101 on the south; the Basin lies in the northwest corner of the junction of these freeways. The Basin is also bordered by several other main traffic arteries including Sepulveda Boulevard, Ventura Boulevard, White Oak Boulevard, Van Nuys, and Victory Boulevards. Woodley Avenue, Burbank Boulevard and Balboa Boulevard pass through the Basin. Operation of the Van Nuys Airport, located at approximately 2.6 miles north of the Basin, also contributes to the existing noise levels in the area.

3.5 Biological Resources

3.5.1 Plant Resources

A reconnaissance-level vegetation survey was performed on 4 January 2010. The vegetation survey was intended to capture sufficient detail to fully describe each vegetation alliance and any other dominant vegetation features present within the Basin. However, surveys were not exhaustive and not all species within the Basin were inventoried. Vegetation features were determined in the field using tools such as current aerial photography, regionally appropriate plant identification keys, Sawyer *et al.* (2009), and data from other available sources. All Federally owned lands within the Basin boundaries were surveyed. Common plant species were identified and listed in Appendix D1. and Vegetation alliances were mapped using Sawyer *et al.* (2009). Non-native habitat types, which are defined as human-altered areas dominated by non-native vegetation features were also identified and mapped.

Native vegetation alliances identified in the Basin include *Populus fremontii* Forest Alliance, *Salix exigua* Shrubland Alliance, *Baccharis salicifolia* Shrubland Alliance, *Quercus agrifolia* Woodland Alliance, *Eriogonum fasciculatum* Shrubland Alliance, and *Baccharis pilularis* Shrubland Alliance (Sawyer *et al.* 2009). Several non-native habitat types include ornamental tree/maintained lawn, disturbed riparian, agriculture, and ruderal land. Map 20 shows the distribution of each vegetation alliance and non-native habitat type.

Vegetation in the Basin was originally altered from its natural state by the establishment of agriculture and urbanization followed by the construction of the Dam and associated works. Vegetation has been altered further by periods of several droughts (CDWR 2009), natural and human-caused erosion, establishment of invasive (non-native) plant species, and ongoing planting and maintenance of ornamental landscaping. Native vegetation alliances within the Basin are fragmented, degraded, and small in size.

3.5.2 Vegetation Communities

Populus fremontii Forest Alliance consists of a tall, open, broadleaved winter-deciduous riparian forest dominated by Fremont cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), black cottonwood (*P. trichocarpa*), red willow (*Salix laevigata*), arroyo willow (*S. lasiolepis*), and sandbar willow (*S. exigua*) (Sawyer *et al.* 2009). Other tree species including coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) and white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*) are less dominant. Giant reed (*Arundo donax*), an invasive

species, is common throughout this alliance. *Populus fremontii* Forest Alliance is found within the various stream channels in the Basin which have been channelized and manipulated for flood risk management. Two areas dominated by *Populus fremontii* Forest Alliance include a stretch along the Los Angeles River and Haskell Creek, downstream of Burbank Boulevard. This vegetation alliance comprises approximately 84.3 acres or 3.9% of the Basin (Map 20).



***Populus fremontii* Forest Alliance**



***Salix exigua* Shrubland Alliance**

Salix exigua Shrubland Alliance is composed of dense, broadleaved, winter-deciduous riparian thickets dominated by several willow species including sandbar willow, red willow, and arroyo willow, with scattered emergent Fremont cottonwood and western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) (Sawyer *et al.* 2009). Most stands of *Salix exigua* Shrubland Alliance are too dense to allow much understory development. Soils in this vegetation alliance are loose, sandy or fine gravelly alluvium deposited near stream channels during flood flows (Sawyer *et al.* 2009). This early seral type requires repeated flooding to prevent succession to *Populus fremontii* Forest Alliance. Other plant species common to this alliance within the Basin include mulefat (*Baccharis salicifolia*) and southern California black walnut (*Juglans californica*), and invasive species such as giant reed, tree tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*), and castor bean (*Ricinus communis*). In the Basin, this alliance is restricted to a border around Haskell Creek, upstream of Burbank Boulevard. This vegetation alliance comprises approximately 12.7 acres or 0.6% of the Basin (Map 20).

Baccharis salicifolia Shrubland Alliance often forms a monoculture, dominated only by mulefat. It is found in areas of intermittent stream channels with a fairly coarse substrate and moderately deep surface water (Sawyer *et al.* 2009). This early seral alliance is maintained by disturbance from frequent flooding, whereas without this feature, most patches would succeed to either cottonwood or sycamore dominated riparian forest (Sawyer *et al.* 2009). Like mulefat, other species present in this vegetation alliance are disturbance-adapted, requiring a frequent regime of disturbance events to remain dominant, such as flooding and scouring. Other species common to *Baccharis salicifolia* Shrubland Alliance include telegraph weed (*Heterotheca grandiflora*) and sandbar willow. Common non-native invasive species include giant reed, tobacco tree, castor bean, poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*), and cocklebur (*Xanthium strumarium*). *Baccharis salicifolia* Shrubland Alliance is found adjacent to the

wildlife lake and in the stream channel of the Los Angeles River, south of Burbank Boulevard. This vegetation alliance comprises approximately 12.5 acres or 0.6% of the Basin (Map 20).



***Baccharis salicifolia* Shrubland Alliance**

Quercus agrifolia Woodland Alliance forms a woodland dominated by a mix of oak species, shrubs, and herbaceous plants. For a stand to be classified as *Quercus agrifolia* Woodland Alliance, only coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) should dominate (Sawyer *et al.* 2009). Other species found within *Quercus agrifolia* Woodland Alliance in the Basin include valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), poison-oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), and coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*). This alliance is usually found growing in valleys or on gentle to steep slopes with moderately deep soils (Sawyer *et al.* 2009). *Quercus agrifolia* Woodland Alliance is found on either side of Haskell Creek, south of Burbank Boulevard. This vegetation alliance comprises approximately 11.2 acres or 0.5% of the Basin (Map 20).

Eriogonum fasciculatum Shrubland Alliance is only found in the upland areas surrounding Haskell Creek, south of Burbank Boulevard. Field observations indicated that some of this vegetation alliance may have been reestablished through restoration efforts; however, this could not be confirmed. *Eriogonum fasciculatum* Shrubland Alliance, most likely a common vegetation alliance in the area in the past, is found on rarely flooded low-gradient deposits along streams with shallow and rocky soils (Sawyer *et al.* 2009). This vegetation alliance is dominated by a temperate broad-leaved evergreen shrubland that occurs across a range of altitudes beginning at sea level (Sawyer *et al.* 2009). *Eriogonum fasciculatum* Shrubland Alliance maintains a continuous or intermittent canopy that rarely exceeds three feet in height (Sawyer *et al.* 2009). In addition to California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), other species found in this alliance include white sage (*Artemisia ludoviciana*), coast live oak, and coast prickly-pear (*Opuntia littoralis*). This vegetation alliance comprises approximately 31.9 acres or 1.5% of the Basin (Map 20).



***Quercus agrifolia* Woodland Alliance**



***Eriogonum fasciculatum* Shrubland Alliance**

Baccharis pilularis Shrubland Alliance found in the Basin is dominated by a mix of native and introduced annual grasses interspersed with scattered coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*) (Sawyer *et al.* 2009). Other plant species intermixed within *Baccharis pilularis* Shrubland Alliance includes black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), shortpod mustard (*Brassica geniculata*), telegraph weed, and white sage (Sawyer *et al.* 2009). This shrubland alliance was once common throughout coastal California. Currently it usually only occurs on bluffs, slopes, and terraces (Sawyer *et al.* 2009). *Baccharis pilularis* Shrubland Alliance is can be found between the wildlife lake and the Dam embankment. This vegetation alliance comprises approximately 167.4 acres or 7.8% of the Basin (Map 20).



***Baccharis pilularis* Shrubland Alliance**



Ornamental Tree/ Maintained Lawn

Ornamental Tree/Maintained Lawn is found throughout the Basin in areas that include the Sepulveda Dam Recreation Area, Anthony C. Beilenson Park, Balboa Sports Complex, Woodley Park, Hjelte Sports Center, the Golf Course, and all other landscaped urban areas. Most of these areas are dominated by planted and maintained lawns interspersed with ornamental trees. Common tree species include Canary Island pine (*Pinus canariensis*), Peruvian pepper tree (*Schinus molle*), eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* sp.), various palms (*Washingtonia* sp.), common olive (*Olea europaea*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), London plane (*Platanus acerifolia*), sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), and Chinese elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*). Invasive species such as common ice plant (*Mesembryanthemum crystallinum*), castor bean, English ivy (*Hedera helix*), English holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), and black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) are also found

throughout this non-native habitat. The tree canopy is partly open and large gaps exist around open water and the golf course features. Some sports fields are dominated entirely by maintained lawns. All areas of ornamental tree/maintained lawn appear to be regularly maintained, with little native t. This non-native habitat type comprises approximately 801.2 acres or 37.5% of the Basin (Map 20).

Disturbed riparian is restricted to Encino Creek to the south of Burbank Boulevard. Along this reach, a mix of ornamental, invasive species, and native plant species are bound on all sides by man-made surfaces. Plant species found in disturbed riparian include red willow, giant reed, various palms, umbrella sedge (*Fuirena* sp.), and eucalyptus which grows on the relatively dry edges. This non-native habitat type comprises approximately 58.5 acres or 2.7% of the Basin (Map 20).

Ruderal Lands are areas that have been substantially altered by maintenance or construction causing them to be devoid of vegetation. Ruderal land is found throughout the Basin in areas surrounding the Dam, near residential and commercial developments, and where undeveloped areas receive heavy or frequent use. Ruderal land includes various graded access roads and trails, dirt parking areas, and annual flood basins. High frequency of disturbance and poor quality soils found in these areas prevents most plants from becoming established; however, hardy herbaceous invasive species such as prickly Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*) and cocklebur are both present. This non-native habitat type comprises approximately 316.9 acres or 14.8% of the Basin (Map 20).



Disturbed Riparian



Ruderal Land

Two agricultural areas are found in the Basin; between Victory Boulevard and Oxnard Street in the northwest, and between Burbank Boulevard and the Dam embankment to the southeast. Agricultural areas were dominated by fields growing unidentified crops. This non-native habitat type comprises approximately 193.0 acres or 9.0% of the Basin (Map 20).

3.5.3 Non-Native and Exotic Plant Infestations

Significant non-native plant infestations are areas with 40% or more of the total vegetation cover dominated by a non-native species. This threshold was determined based on patterns noted in canopy cover estimates quantified in the field. Infestations within Sepulveda Basin include those caused by black mustard, shortpod mustard, and giant reed. Shortpod and black mustard form eight discrete infestations, including four sites in the wildlife management area, two sites located immediately downstream of the Dam, one site within the model aircraft field, and one site within the mostly ruderal land on the eastern edge of Balboa Golf Course (Map 20). In these areas, shortpod and black mustard almost completely dominate the herbaceous and shrub layers. These areas were disturbed in the recent past by agricultural activities, flooding, or earthmoving, and left fallow, creating conditions for the establishment of these disturbance-adapted species. Giant reed infestations are present in five discrete areas including along Bull Creek, along a small reach in the northwest of the Basin, two sites on Encino Creek, and a small site immediately upstream of the Dam.

Other non-native plant species are found within Sepulveda Dam Basin but occur at densities below infestation level. Tree tobacco and castor bean are distributed throughout the Basin but have the highest densities on disturbed slopes near wet areas such as ponds, lakes, and streambeds. Poison hemlock, stinging nettle, cocklebur, and giant wild rye are all common to riparian habitats such as *Populus fremontii* Forest Alliance, *Salix exigua* Shrubland Alliance, and *Baccharis salicifolia* Shrubland Alliance. Prickly Russian thistle and white nightshade (*Solanum douglasii*) are found throughout the Basin in areas of frequent disturbance.

3.5.4 Animal Resources

The Basin is comprised of a variety of habitat types, including a variety of native vegetation alliances (Sawyer *et al.* 2009), disturbed vegetation communities, agricultural land, constructed open water, disturbed wetlands (NWI 2010), and developed parks or urbanized areas (Map 20). Animal species observed during vegetation surveys conducted on 4 January 2010 were recorded and a list of species is presented in Appendix D2. Species presented do not represent a comprehensive list of species that may be present in the Basin and no formal wildlife surveys were conducted in preparation of this EA.

Species common to the Basin include native and non-native fishes, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and birds. Over 120 species of birds have been documented within the Basin. Open water areas in the Basin attract waterfowl and shorebirds while upland habitats host a diversity of passerine species. Dry upland areas host common lizard and snake species. Only two amphibians are common, including the California toad and Pacific tree frog. Non-native species such as feral cats and dogs are also found in the Basin.

The altered seasonal flows and existing barriers to fish passage severely limit fish presence in the Basin. According to Moyle (2002), the native non-game freshwater fishes that have been historically found in waters of the Basin include arroyo chub, Santa Ana speckled dace, Santa Ana sucker, threespine stickleback, and rainbow trout. However, the Santa Ana sucker, a Federally protected species, has no known occurrences in the Basin (CDFG 2010b) and is not

expected to occur upstream of the Dam. Common non-native species that may occur in the Basin include largemouth bass, bluegill, western mosquito fish, channel catfish, fathead minnow, common carp, and goldfish (Moyle 2002). No fish data were collected during field surveys within the Basin.

3.5.5 Special Status Listed Species

Species status taxa include those protected by the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Each Federally protected species that may potentially occur within the Basin is described per NEPA compliance, along with an assessment of whether that species is likely or not likely to currently occur within the Basin.

The USFWS maintains a database of Federally protected special status taxa, which reports over 20 species as occurring in Los Angeles County (USFWS 2010). The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) maintains the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), which compiles reported observations of special status species (CDFG 2010b). The CNDDDB maintains records of each recorded occurrence of a species provided by any agency or private entity, and as such, is not intended to provide conclusive confirmation of the presence of any species. Furthermore, field surveys were not conducted to determine the presence of special status taxa, which would be necessary to conclusively determine the absence of a species. In lieu of field surveys, data from the CNDDDB and field studies, if available, provide the starting point for determining the potential presence of a species.

According to the CNDDDB, there is a single special status species that has been recently observed within Sepulveda Dam Basin. The least Bell's vireo has been observed in the Basin in 2009, 2010, and 2011 by different observers, mostly along the edges of the Los Angeles River near the Dam.

The least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) was listed as endangered in May 1986 (USFWS 1986). Critical habitat for the species was designated in 1994, though it does not extend into the Basin (Map 21) (USFWS 1994). The least Bell's vireo is a spring and summer breeding resident, migrating south for fall and winter. It primarily inhabits riparian woodlands, scrublands, and thickets for breeding. This vireo was found to select nest locations primarily within willows, where vegetation is minimally disturbed, along riparian areas or at the edges of riparian and upland habitats, where vegetation is complex and has shrubby willows in the understory, and where overstory is comprised of Fremont cottonwoods and willows (Olson *et al.* 1989, USFWS 1986, USFWS 1989). Population declines of this species are primarily due to urban and agricultural development, habitat alteration, and brood parasitism by the brown-headed cowbird (USFWS 1986).

3.5.6 Wildlife Corridors

The nearest area of non-urbanized and relatively natural habitat is less than a mile from Sepulveda Dam Basin within the Santa Monica Mountains. The California State Parks Departments identifies portions of the Santa Monica Mountains as significant wild land (CSPD 2009). However, there are no corridors of connectivity available to terrestrial or aquatic species between the Santa Monica Mountains and the Basin. It is possible that birds and bats may pass between the two areas, though no data is available on this potential link.

Both barriers and filters are present throughout the Basin. Several major roadways pass through the Basin, including Balboa Boulevard, Burbank Boulevard, and Woodley Avenue. In addition, there are significant areas of development within the Basin. Overall, the Basin is land locked and has very little connectivity to natural areas. Except for birds and bats, most mammals, reptiles and amphibians in the area are precluded from migration in or out of the Basin. Coyotes or other animals that have become adapted to urbanized settings may be present on occasion.

Though it is highly disturbed, the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area is the only area within the Basin that is specifically designated, and managed, for wildlife habitat. Yet, even throughout this area, there are significant barriers to wildlife passage. Woodley Avenue and Burbank Boulevard both bisect the more natural areas of the Basin, effectively restricting movement of small ground-dwelling species and larger mammals within the area. A tunnel has been constructed beneath Burbank Boulevard to extend the trail system throughout the Basin and it is possible that larger mammals utilize this tunnel for passage, though no data is available.

3.6 Cultural Resources

Cultural resources are locations of human activity, occupation, or use. They include expressions of human culture and history in the physical environment, such as archaeological sites, historic buildings and structures, or other culturally significant places. Cultural resources can also be natural features, plants, and animals or places that are considered to be important or sacred to a culture, subculture, or community. Resources may be important individually or as part of a grouping of complementary resources, such as a historic neighborhood. Cultural resources that may be present include three general categories: archaeological resources, historic buildings and structures, and traditional cultural properties.

Archaeological resources refer to surface or buried material remains, buried structures, or other items used or modified by people. Prehistoric archaeological resources date to the time before the European presence in the planning area and can include village or campsites, food remains, and stone tools and tool-making debris. Ethnohistoric or protohistoric archaeological resources are relatively rare but include evidence of European contact, such as trade beads in a site that otherwise appears to be prehistoric. Historic archaeological sites are those deposits that post-date European contact. Examples of historic archaeological sites are structural ruins, trash deposits, agricultural features, water control, and privies. Archaeological sites can have components from multiple time periods and are typically discovered and recorded through pedestrian survey. A pedestrian survey is a method of examining an area for archaeological artifacts and features in which surveyors, spaced at regular intervals, systematically walk over the area being

and a variety of balancing elements, climbers and slides. The ground in the play area is covered with rubber matting to provide fall protection. The UAP was developed by the City.

The **Bull Creek Restoration** Area is located east of Balboa Boulevard and west of the Anthony C. Beilenson Park and is approximately **29 acres**. The area includes 3,000 feet of the re-contoured reek and features an oxbow channel that forms a small island. Reclaimed water from Lake Balboa is piped and released in the upper creek to supplement existing flow. Aquatic, riparian, and native upland habitat has been established on the site and pedestrian bridges and walkways have been established in the area to provide access. Interpretative signage has been established at key locations in the area to offer educational opportunities to visitors. The area was restored jointly by the City and the Corps under the authority of Section 1135 (b) of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1986, (P.L. 99-662, as amended) and was completed in 2009.

Balboa Sports Complex

The complex is an 85 acre facility located northwest of the intersection of Balboa and Burbank Boulevards. It includes four lighted baseball diamonds with bleachers for spectator seating, a tennis center with 16 lighted courts, a tennis pro shop, outdoor basketball courts which are lighted, children's play areas at two locations with metal and plastic play equipment and sand and rubber ground cover, an unlighted soccer field, a lighted football field, and lighted volleyball courts. Three structures with restrooms are located on the Sports Center grounds. The Sports Complex also includes the Balboa Park Community Center which has an indoor gymnasium. The Balboa Sports Complex was developed jointly by the City and the Corps as a Code 710 project on a cost-sharing basis.

Woodley Park and Adjacent Amenities

Woodley Park is an 80 acre facility that borders the western and southern side of the Tillman Water Reclamation Plant. The park includes barbeque pits, an unlighted baseball diamond, children's play area, picnic tables, and restrooms. The park is divided into two sections with similar amenities in each. The area referred to as Woodley I has 154 parking places, 26 picnic tables, six barbeques, is shaded by trees, and located next to an ADA accessible restroom facility. Woodley II has 80 parking places, 32 picnic tables. A large open turf field is adjacent. Restroom amenities are located nearby. Woodley Park was developed jointly by the City and the Corps under the Code 710 cost-sharing program.

The Japanese Garden is located on the grounds of the TWRP. The garden covers an area of 6.5 acres and is three gardens in one. The dry garden features a Tortoise Island, a "three Buddha" stone arrangement and a wisteria viewing arbor. The stroll garden has waterfalls, lakes, and streams, abundant greenery and stone lanterns carved by artisans in Japan. The tea garden consists of a teahouse and adjacent garden. Reclaimed water from the TWRP is used to supply the water features in the garden. An admission fee is charged to enter the garden. The garden was developed by the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation.

The Woodley Park Archery Range is located in the extreme northeastern portion of the Basin on approximately 8 acres of land. Amenities include a partially enclosed an 18 meter short range

and a 90 meter long range which has 12 lanes and is equipped with compressed bales. The long range is ADA accessible. The range also has restrooms. The range was developed by the City.

Sepulveda Basin Cricket Fields are located in the northeastern portion of the Basin. The facility has two fields on land leased to the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. The Cricket Fields include bleachers, a picnic area with picnic tables, restroom amenities, and a parking lot.

The Model Airplane Field is located northeast of the confluence of Woodley Creek and the Los Angeles River. The field occupies approximately 15 acres and includes an open graded field for radio controlled and tethered model airplanes. The field has a parking lot and restroom amenities. The field was developed by the City. The restrooms were developed jointly by the Corps and the City under the Code 710 cost sharing program.

The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area covers an area of 200 acres and is located in the northeastern portion of the Basin and is bounded by Burbank Boulevard on the south, Woodley Avenue on the west, Woodley Park on the north, and the Sepulveda Dam Embankment to the east. The wildlife area features a 12 acre wildlife lake with a 0.75 acre bird-refuge island. Water is supplied to the wildlife lake from the TWRP. Native annuals, shrubs, and trees have been planted throughout the reserve. The wildlife area also has an educational staging area and amphitheatre, various pathways with signage and viewing areas, Haskell Creek which has been reconfigured and re-vegetated, and pedestrian bridges over Haskell Creek. Work on the wildlife area began in 1979 with the establishment of a 48 acre riparian area. Over the years, the refuge has been improved and expanded, with the last major expansion being in 1998. This area has been developed jointly by the Corps and the City under the Code 710 cost sharing program.

Hjelte Sports Center and Adjacent Amenities

The Hjelte Sports Center is an approximately 12 acre facility located in the southern portion of the Sepulveda Basin between Burbank Boulevard to the north and the Sepulveda Dam embankment to the south. The center has four lighted baseball fields, bleachers at each field, restroom amenities, a concession stand, and a storage facility. The Hjelte Sports Center was developed jointly by the City and the Corps under the Code 710 cost-sharing program.

The Sepulveda Garden Center is an approximately 12 acre facility located south of U.S. Route 101, west of Hayvenhurst Avenue, and north of Magnolia Boulevard. The garden center provides 800 garden plots for local citizens to grow fruits, vegetables, flowers, and herbs. Each plot is 10 feet wide by 20 feet wide. A fee is charged for use of the garden plots. Additional amenities available at the garden center are public telephones, first aid supplies, and restrooms. A greenhouse is available for gardeners for germinating of seeds for transplanting. The Sepulveda Garden Center was developed by the City.

Libbit Park is located south of U.S. Route 101, on a narrow strip of land east of the Sepulveda Dam Saddle Dike on the west side of Libbit Avenue. The park occupies approximately 3.6 acres. The park is landscaped but has no picnic or play ground equipment. The park was developed by the City.