

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

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Conservancy Grants \$1 million to Frank Gehry-led L.A. River Planning Effort

LOS ANGELES (November 2, 2015)—The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy voted tonight to award an \$1 million matching grant to the Los Angeles River Revitalization Corporation to fund a data-driven analysis of the entire 51-mile L.A. River led by architect Frank Gehry. Gehry’s objective is first to create a single, central information database using the best available technology. This will encompass a complex range of issues including hydrology, public health, ecology, open space, land use, water resource demands, economics, and transportation. This information will be used to understand and help create an organizational structure to coordinate between the many parties involved in the river revitalization effort including public agencies, stakeholders, and communities.

“There are portions of the Los Angeles River that can only be adequately envisioned by one of the most creative architects in the world today,” said Joseph T. Edmiston, Executive Director of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. “Frank Gehry views the physical embodiment of the L.A. River as an opportunity. The river has all this ability to carry water, which is only needed a small fraction of the time. How do we better utilize that space, especially where the river goes through the most disadvantaged communities? We need the best minds to help answer these questions.”

The funding, which is fully supported by the Brown Administration, will come from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84) which was approved by the voters to fund safe drinking water, water quality and supply, flood control, waterway and natural resource protection, water pollution and contamination control, state and local park improvements, public access to natural resources, and water conservation efforts.

The Conservancy has been a leader in the effort to revitalize and create parks along the Los Angeles River for more than 20 years, beginning in 1994 with its adoption of the “Los Angeles River El Pueblo to Griffith Park Trail Connector Workprogram” and the opening of its Elysian Valley Gateway Park along the eight-mile soft bottom portion of

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the river known as the Glendale Narrows. Since that time, the Conservancy has continued to connect densely populated neighborhoods with recreational opportunities along the river and its tributaries by developing dozens of river parks, and funding bike trail improvements, public access, greenways, and visitor-serving amenities. It has been involved in every major planning effort along the river.

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy is a State Agency that was established by the Legislature in 1980. Since that time, it has helped preserve more than 72,000 acres of parkland in both wilderness and urban settings. The Conservancy's mission is to strategically buy back, preserve, protect, restore, and enhance treasured pieces of Southern California to form and interlinking system of urban, rural, and river parks, open space, trails, and wildlife habitat that are easily accessible to the general public.

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