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## MEETING NOTES

**Date:** 17 September 2008  
**Date Issued:** 13 October 2008  
**Project:** Whittier Narrows Recreation Area Master Plan Input  
**RE:** Stakeholder Team Meeting #3  
**Present:** See attached sign in sheet.

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### Meeting Agenda:

1. *Re-start plans and schedule*
2. *Advisory Teams organization and roles (30 minutes)*
  - *Executive Team – principal lessees at WNRA*
  - *Stakeholder Team – other municipalities and agencies with a vested interest in WNRA*
  - *Other groups – user groups, advocacy organizations*
3. *Proposed projects and related community plans*
4. *Community input – goals, and workplan*
5. *Wrap-up and next meeting agendas*

### 1. Re-start plans and schedule

The revised schedule was reviewed. Key milestones included:

- a. Completion of initial “visioning” work will occur by end of October 2008. First public meeting scheduled for Oct. 23 at South El Monte High School.
- b. Completion of concept proposal development will occur in November and December. Draft proposals to be presented to the public in January, after the holidays are over. It is expected that the Executive Team would participate in “vetting” proposals in November and December.
- c. Refinement of plan proposals and preparation of plan documents would occur between January and March, with a third public meeting held at the end of March. The compliance effort would also be initiated in the first quarter of 2009, with the scoping meeting held wither in January or March.
- d. Compliance activities are expected to be completed by August 2009.

### 2. Role of the Advisory Teams

Roles and responsibilities of the various Advisory Teams were discussed. They include:

*Executive Team – key decisionmakers from USACE, principal lessees (LA County Parks and Recreation, LA County Department of Public Works, City of Pico Rivera), Rivers and Mountains Conservancy*

- a. Providing feedback and guidance to planning team.
- b. “Vetting”/testing proposed concepts.
- c. Resolving competing interests – this function was emphasized and it is expected that team members may need to negotiate and compromise on certain proposals to reach consensus or, lacking that, a strong majority voice.
- d. Serving as a liaison with the larger community – advocating for the plan. This role was also emphasized.

*Stakeholder Team – key departmental staff from partners above, adjacent municipalities, Water Replenishment District, key elected officials (staff from Supervisor’s Office, State Representative’s office), OTHERS TO BE IDENTIFIED*

- a. Providing feedback and guidance to planning team.
- b. “Vetting”/testing proposed concepts.
- c. Providing specific feedback on technical issues
- d. Serving as a liaison with the larger community – advocating for the plan. This role was also emphasized.

*Action item:* The planning team suggested that this group might be expanded to include other major advocacy interests (environmental, social justice), selected non-recreational lessees or outgrants (e.g. Suburban Water Co.), related organizations (e.g. CalTrans) or selected recreational user groups (e.g. regional trails advocacy organizations) that might could be expected to have a significant ongoing voice in the planning process. The planning team sought input from the stakeholder team on this issue and did not receive feedback at the meeting. The planning team will confer with the RMC and continue to work with the stakeholder team to develop a list of potential additions to the group, or as described below, to solicit input in a different venue if the stakeholder team is not expanded.

*Action item:* The planning team had originally proposed a Technical Advisory Group (agency staff with specialized expertise, environmental and water quality professionals, etc.) and a Community Advisory Group (community leaders, advocacy organizations, user groups) to advise the planning process. It was suggested that these groups be convened and a schedule developed for involving them at selected key milestones (such as at the draft concept stage and then when concepts have been refined). Members could also be contacted individually for specific feedback as proposals are developed.



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The planning team has suggested representative agencies for the Technical Advisory Group as listed below.

**From our current working group:**

Carvel H. Bass, USACOE  
Richard Anderson, San Gabriel River Watermaster  
LA County Parks  
LA County Public Works – representative from Watershed Division, others  
LA County Sanitation  
Water Replenishment District

**Others:**

Nature Conservancy  
Audubon Society  
Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project  
LASGRWC  
MRCA  
USC-Green Visions  
California Equestrian Trails and Land Coalition  
CA Regional Water Quality Control Board

Membership for the Community Advisory group is currently being solicited.

**3. Review of Projects “On the Boards”**

Projects currently in development were reviewed by the stakeholder team. These included the following.

**LA County Parks and Recreation**

- a. Completing master plan for realignment and expansion of existing soccer field area from 8 fields to a total of 16-18.\*
- b. Completing a management plan for the lakes area that would address existing uses and facilities (boating, fishing, etc.), treatment of storm runoff and water quality, and that would improve walking and cycling loops around the lakes.\*
- c. Completing plans and construction documents for a bike trail connection at Rush Street.\*
- d. Completing plans for the Discovery Center.\*
- e. Participating with LA County Public Works in issuing an RFP for a facility master plan and drainage improvements plan at the Equestrian Center.\*
- f. Implementing construction of new interpretive and regulatory signage, per the approved Signage plan. (The team has this plan in house.)
- g. Constructing new restrooms and playground facilities. (Do not need plans, just need quantities and locations.)

*Action step:* Obtain copies of starred plans in particular.



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### **LA County Department of Public Works**

- a. Considering first phase of implementation of Zone 1 Ditch/Lario Creek improvements and trails. A water rights issue was mentioned that might affect the ability to restore/improve the channel. (Team has plans in house.)
- b. Continuing to study options for enhancing/expanding conservation pool.
- c. Participating with LA County Parks and Recreation on the Equestrian Center plan.

### **City of Pico Rivera**

- a. Has proposed new entrance gates and the vacation of a road in the vicinity of Bicentennial Park and the Sports Arena, to prevent after-hours access and occasional vandalism in the area.\*
- b. Developing an RFQ for a new multipurpose facility adjacent to the existing Sports Arena.\*
- c. Proposing day use facilities at Bicentennial Campground, possibly to be operated by picnic concessionaire.\*

*Action step:* Obtain copies of starred plans in particular.

### **Rivers and Mountains Conservancy**

- a. Partnering on Discovery Center improvements and restoration of natural area.
- b. Planned restoration at Rio Hondo south of the 60 Freeway to the Bosque (habitat, water quality, potential UV treatment and polishing wetlands, groundwater recharge.) Project will need Regional Water Quality Control Board approval.\*
- c. Supporting connections to Emerald Necklace.\*
- d. Supporting habitat connections from Dam to Montebello Hills.\*

*Action step:* Obtain copies of starred plans in particular.

### **US Army Corps of Engineers**

- a. Proposing revamping and improvements to maintenance yard, including office and surrounding landscape.\*
- b. Has proposed possible use of strawberry fields for recreation.
- c. A study has been undertaken to address seepage issues near the Dam.\*

*Action step:* Obtain copies of starred plans in particular.

The group was asked about related planning efforts and the following were mentioned.

- a. Rosemead Community Plan – presently underway, has component on parks, trails and mobility that could interface with our planning effort.
- b. LA County General Plan -- -- update to be initiated.
- c. Montebello General Plan – update to be initiated.
- d. Sanitation District – currently completing Infrastructure Plan that could require coordination with WNRA proposals.



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*Action step:* Stay abreast of these planning efforts as they progress. With exception of LA County, none reports that data are presently available in GIS format for exchange with the planning team.

#### **4. Plans for Community Engagement**

A “palette” of community engagement strategies was presented to the team. These included:

- a. Surveys – draft survey in English and Spanish was distributed and discussed.
- b. Focus groups/small group interviews with key constituents – Whittier Narrows Vision Plan Evaluation Form was distributed to the team asking for recommendations for constituencies/organizations that should be surveyed
- c. Attendance at special events – these would include having a presence at selected festivals and community events, as well as hosting some new special activities.
- d. Website – [www.visioningwhittiernarrows.org](http://www.visioningwhittiernarrows.org) is in development and will link to partner municipalities’ websites to provide a seamless connection to project materials.

Attendance at the Fiestas Patrias festival on September 14 was discussed. LA County Parks and Recreation facilitated securing booth space in a visible location. Over 500 visitors were surveyed.

*Action step:* LA County Parks and Recreation indicated that coordination with their Public Information Office (PIO) should happen ASAP in order to make sure that County conventions are followed and that materials are of an appropriate quality. In light of the upcoming Oct. 23 public meeting, Joan Rupert offered to help schedule and facilitate a meeting with the PIO the following week. (*This was held on September 30.*)

**While publicity for the public meeting has already begun, the team was directed to discontinue any surveying or other publicity (e.g. press release) or major constituent canvassing, until the meetings with the relevant PIOs were held.**

A similar meeting would be necessary with the USACE’s PIO. Phil Serpa was contacted to help identify the appropriate person to talk to and facilitate our getting together. Phil is on assignment in Louisiana but is reachable by email.

Stakeholder Team members did have several suggestions for groups/constituents that should be contacted as part of the outreach process. These included:

- a. Scouts
- b. Youth groups
- c. Sierra Club
- d. Docents at the WNRA
- e. Save Montebello Hills
- f. City of Pico Rivera Historical Society
- g. City of Montebello Historical Society

Others that should be contacted include the Suburban Water Co., Cook Hill Properties, and SoCal Edison.

Joyce Gibson also indicated that she had a roster of user groups, concessionaires and others that she could make available to the planning team.



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Action step: The planning team will meet with Joyce to tour the WNRA and obtain the rosters. (*The tour was held on September 26. The rosters were received on Oct. 1.*)

## **5. Wrap-Up and Next Meeting Schedule**

The following meeting schedule was shared with the group.

### *Oct 8 meeting:*

- Review preliminary survey results as a group – may need to be tabled pending outcome of PIO meetings
- Review preliminary needs assessment work
- Review opportunities and constraints mapping in small groups – mark up maps
- Define criteria for evaluating proposals, team to provide “starter list.”

### *Oct 23: Public Meeting #1: Visioning the WNRA*

### *Nov 12 meeting:*

- Review results from visioning workshops
- Review draft vision statement and design principles

### *Dec 10 meeting:*

- Review draft concept proposals for physical and programming improvements
- Review “off site” proposals that could address needs
- Apply evaluation criteria to screen proposals
- Report out to larger group
- Jan 14 meeting:
- Review objectives and agenda for second community meeting

### *Jan 29: Public Meeting #2: Review and refine draft concept proposals*

### *Mar 29: Public Meeting #3: Review and refine preferred proposals*

*We believe this report accurately reflects what transpired at this meeting. Please comment if you have a different understanding of what occurred. Unless we are notified within five working days of issuing this report, we will assume all parties agree that this report is accurate.*



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