

Consistent with goals outlined in the 2007 Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan (LARRMP) and the 2016 LA River Ecosystem Restoration Project to restore aquatic habitat in and along the L.A. River, the Bureau of Engineering (BOE) has supported concept development and technical exploration for a project in the L.A. River near Downtown L.A. to re-establish aquatic habitat. The L.A. River Fish Habitat Pilot Project (Project) has been gradually developed by a variety of agencies and organizations over several years including the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the California Wildlife Conservation Board, and the Council for Watershed Health (CWH).

On March 19, 2019, the City Council adopted a motion instructing BOE to partner with the CWH to seek and complete work under a Wildlife Conservation Board Proposition 68 Grant to develop approaches to increase habitat function in the low-flow channel of the L.A. River, and to begin the design and modeling of potential restoration options along 4.5 miles of the Los Angeles River from the Arroyo Seco to Washington Street (C.F. 19-0111). This grant was awarded to the CWH that then coordinated with City staff to develop: a Conceptual Ecological Model and Limiting Factors Analysis for Steelhead in the Los Angeles River Watershed; a 30 percent level Basis of Design Report; a Reach 8A Design Development Technical Memorandum; a 60 percent level Basis of Design report and engineering plan set; an environmental review and strategy including permitting applications; and a draft California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) approach for the project.

To advance the project to implementation, BOE and the CWH mutually recommend that BOE assume leadership of the project and apply for grants from the Wildlife Conservation Board and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to fund the Project that is estimated to cost approximately \$7.7 million. If awarded, the grant funding will be used to complete design, secure permits, complete an environmental clearance document, and construct a ¼-mile feature in the bed of the L.A. River, just downstream from the Main Street Bridge. This Project, in addition to its independent value and utility, is intended to inform further implementation of similar features along the many miles of the L.A. River and its tributaries that are concrete-lined and have low-flow channels.

I THEREFORE MOVE, that the City Council authorize the City Engineer to apply for grants from the California Wildlife Conservation Board and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to complete design, construction, and monitoring of the L.A. River Fish Habitat Pilot Project (Project) that is estimated to cost \$7.7 million and, if awarded, to report to Council for approval of the grant agreements.

I FURTHER MOVE, that the City Council instruct the City Engineer, with the assistance of the City Attorney and any other City departments as necessary, to develop a partnership agreement with the Council for Watershed Health to transfer prior work completed on the Project and to establish a role for the Council for Watershed Health in the Project's future science and education mission and to report to Council with the terms of this partnership agreement prior to execution.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Council instruct the Bureau of Sanitation, and any other City departments as necessary, and request that the Department of Water and Power support the successful development, implementation, and management of the Project.

PRESENTED BY: 

MITCH O'FARRELL
Councilmember, 13th District

SECONDED BY: 

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