

5.14.3 Significance Threshold

The threshold for determining if significant impacts on cultural resources would occur is based on Appendix G of the *California Environmental Quality Act Statutes and Guidelines*. The likelihood for significant impacts on cultural resources to occur was evaluated based on the potential for the proposed project to result in:

- Adversely affect an historic property that is considered significant on a federal, state or local level
- Affect an historic property or cultural property that is potentially eligible for National Register of Historic Places through direct or secondary impacts
- Result in the loss of integrity of an historic property or cultural property without proper evaluation, recordation and data recovery

5.14.4 Impact Analysis

The following is the analysis by reach numbers of the likelihood for significant impacts to occur on cultural resources which are known to be present within the proposed *Los Angeles River Master Plan Study Area*.

REACH NO. 1 - Southern Cities

Two prehistoric archaeological sites, CA-LAN-693 and CA-LAN-696, have been recorded adjacent to the Los Angeles River in Long Beach. Although no evidence of either site was extant on the surface, buried deposits may be present; therefore, there is a potential that proposed project elements that involve subsurface excavations may have a significant impact on these cultural resources. Since the two structures with potential to have National Register eligibility, the Union Oil Suspension Pipeline and the Southern Pacific "Horseshoe" Bridge, did not meet the criteria, there will be no significant impacts on these resources.

REACH NO. 2 - Mid-Cities

As a result of one historic building, the Dominguez Ranch Adobe, listed in the National Register of the Historic Places and designated as California Historical Landmark No. 152, and one bridge, the Union Pacific Los Angeles River Bridge, designated as a significant historic resource, the proposed project elements have potential to have a significant impact on the cultural resources of this reach number. No archaeological sites exist in this area, therefore, no impacts on this resource will result from the proposed project elements.

REACH NO. 3 - Downtown Los Angeles

Eleven historic structures have been identified within this reach. There are ten historic bridges, within reach number 3, that are eligible for National Register status and two bridges that have potential for this status. Unless mitigated, the proposed project elements have the potential to have a significant impact on these designated cultural resources. Ground-disturbing activities associated with site-specific project elements such as tree planting and parks recommended in the proposed *Los Angeles River Master Plan*

have the potential to affect the historic archaeological resources that have been revealed extant beneath City of Los Angeles as a result of recent excavation for construction projects. Directed surveys for cultural resources should be undertaken prior to the implementation of any projects involving ground-disturbing activities and suitable avoidance measures developed to protect extant cultural resources.

REACH NO. 4 - Glendale Narrows

Research within this reach recorded no prehistoric sites; therefore, no significant impacts from the proposed project will occur. Presence of a historic site, CA-LAN-797, has been located at Griffith Park. Three other historic resources, including Universal Studios, has also been identified.

REACH NO. 5 - San Fernando Valley

Project elements that involve subsurface excavation may result in significant impacts on resources as a result of intact archaeological sites being found beneath developed areas within one mile of the project. An archaeological records search of the Archaeological Information Center at UCLA is needed to supplement existing available information. Ground-disturbing activities associated with site-specific project elements such as tree planting and park development recommended in the proposed *Los Angeles River Master Plan* have the potential to have an effect on the historical archaeological resources that have been revealed beneath the City of Los Angeles as a result of recent excavation for construction projects.

REACH NO. 6 - Tujunga Wash

Project elements that involve subsurface excavation may result in significant impacts on known archaeological and cultural resources found within this reach.

5.14.5 Mitigation Measures

The following measures are recommended to ensure that the potential impacts of the proposed project elements can be mitigated below the level of significance:

REACH NO. 1 - Southern Cities

Any project elements that involve subsurface excavation should be monitored by a qualified archaeologist to avoid potential impacts to unknown buried cultural resources within this reach. Subsurface excavation should be avoided in the areas where the two prehistoric sites were recorded unless archaeological test excavations are conducted first (SHEETS 3 and 11).

REACH NO. 2 - Mid-Cities

Any project elements that involve subsurface excavation should be monitored by a qualified archaeologist to avoid potential impacts to unknown buried cultural resources within this reach.

REACH NO. 3 - Downtown Los Angeles

Impacts to unknown buried archaeological sites can be avoided by updating the record search data to determine areas of potential subsurface sensitivity identified as a result of recent construction projects in downtown Los Angeles and by requiring monitoring by a qualified archaeologist during subsurface excavation. Impacts to the significant historic structures should be avoided.

REACH NO. 4 - Glendale Narrows

Impacts to unknown subsurface archaeological sites can be avoided by requiring monitoring by a qualified archaeologist during subsurface excavation.

REACH NO. 5 - San Fernando Valley

Impacts to unknown subsurface archaeological sites can be avoided by requiring monitoring by a qualified archaeologist during subsurface excavation.

REACH NO. 6 - Tujunga Wash

Tujunga Wash, particularly at the north end of the reach, is sensitive with respect to archaeological resources. Project elements at the Hansen Dam Flood Control Basin should be designed in accordance with recommendations in the Corps' Historic Properties Management Plan (HPMP) (Romani et al. 1994) for the basin in order to avoid impacts to archaeological sites. The HPMP includes a recommendation for continued coordination with Native American representatives. Plans for an interpretive site at the top of the dam would require consultation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, because the dam itself appears to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (SHEET 101). Subsurface excavation along Tujunga Wash should be monitored by a qualified archaeologist to avoid impacts to unknown subsurface sites.

5.15 RECREATION

This section of the environmental analysis describes the regulatory framework established on the federal, regional, county, and local jurisdiction levels with respect to land use planning and management strategies related to park and recreation resources. This section also includes a description of the existing recreation facilities and programs; the significant thresholds for the proposed project to impact recreational resources; an impact analysis of recreation, and if necessary, any recommended mitigation measures.

5.15.1 Regulatory Framework

Federal

Development of facilities within the Los Angeles River and the Tujunga Wash is governed by the goals and policies set forth in the *Los Angeles River Master Plan Final Report* (Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Regional Planning 1996). The *Master Plan* goals include the provision of recreational opportunities along the River, safe access to those recreational opportunities, and compatibility between the River and other activity centers. Recreational uses will also comply with the goals of the *Master Environmental Impact Report Los Angeles County Drainage Area Project* (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1994b), *The Los Angeles County Drainage Area Review Final Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement* (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1991a), *The Los Angeles County Drainage Area Review Final Feasibility Interim Report: Recreation Inventory Report* (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1991c), *The Los Angeles County Drainage Area Recreation Review* (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1988), and *The LACDA System Recreation Study* (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1980).

The National Park Service is responsible for governing the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, which crosses Los Angeles County in a west-northwest course from Jurupa Hills in Riverside County to Ventura County. The National Historic Trail traverses the Cities of Ontario and San Gabriel, crosses the River near downtown Los Angeles, and continues northwest to San Fernando Valley. Near the City of El Monte, the LARIO Trail crosses the National Historic Trail. As indicated in the proposed *Los Angeles River Master Plan Final Report*, the LARIO Trail would be extended to meet up with the National Historic Trail near downtown Los Angeles (Los Angeles County Departments of Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Regional Planning 1996b). The proposed project is also subject to the *Americans with Disabilities Act*.

The *Americans with Disabilities Act* of 1991 is a federal civil rights act which prohibits discrimination against those with disabilities. The act covers employment, housing, and access to all public places whether they are privately or publicly owned or operated.

Regional

The Open and Space and Conservation Element of the *Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide* (SCAG 1995) states that urban-type land uses and facilities needed to support future additional population growth which will consume a large portion of the remaining privately-held land in the

region. The plan emphasizes the conservation of open space areas that provide opportunities for outdoor recreation which is considered important for providing a good quality of life for residents who live in highly urbanized areas of the region.

County

The Conservation/Open Space and Recreation Element of the County of Los Angeles *General Plan* (Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning 1993 and 1980a) includes general goals and policies related to County recreational facilities. Related goals to the proposed project include: development of a system of bikeways and hiking trails; and linkage of recreational facilities where possible.

The proposed project is intended to provide recreational amenities to offset existing regional deficits in recreation programs and facilities. With this project, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LACDPW) will be able to initiate the objectives set forth in *A Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan for 2010* (Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation 1992a) which identifies goals for strategic planning efforts related to park planning. A number of the policies identified in *A Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan for 2010* are relevant to the planning process for the proposed project. The County defined six objectives consistent with obtaining these policies:

- Provide a system of recreation programs throughout the County to meet the diversified interests of the residents.
- Provide for continuing maintenance and rehabilitation of all park and recreation facilities.
- Provide opportunities for revenue generation through community and user-based programs, festivals, and events.
- Provide leadership and support for issues of environmental concern.
- Provide a system of park and recreation facilities that meet the diversified needs of residents
- Insure that land use planning within each park is compatible with County land use guidelines.

Project development and improvements, with respect to bicycle trails, including the LARIO Trail, will be consistent with the Plan of Bikeways Map of the County of Los Angeles *General Plan* (Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning 1984a) and the County Riding and Hiking Trails Map (Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation 1992b). The County Plan of Bikeways lists the following goals related to providing convenient bicycle routes throughout the County: "develop an interconnected network of county-wide bicycle corridors; require redevelopment projects to provide bicycle facilities within their boundaries; use existing and abandoned public rights-of-way for present and future bikeways where feasible, and where a need can be demonstrated; provide trees and other appropriate landscaping along bikeways; wherever feasible, initiate a program to provide bicycle racks, lockers, and other security devices at public parks; separate bicycle from automobile traffic wherever physically and economically feasible; and provide bikeways which interconnect with other transportation modes" (Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning 1984a).

Local

The *Los Angeles River Master Plan Final Report* will also include goals addressed in the general plans of the thirteen adjacent cities. The general goals of the various cities regarding recreational uses is to preserve and, if possible, acquire new open space; maintain and improve public parks and recreational areas; and interface these areas with adjacent cities and right-of-ways. As stated in the *Master Environmental Impact Report Los Angeles County Drainage Area Project*, specific policy plans of local jurisdictions that address recreational resources and are consistent among each other and with the general goals of the *Los Angeles River Master Plan Final Report* include:

- **Montebello.** City of Montebello's *General Plan* (1990) proposes improvements to Grant Rea Park, including additional picnic tables and seating. The *Plan* also includes additional landscaping for Reggie Rodriguez Park.
- **Commerce.** City of Commerce's *General Plan* (1987) proposes to add soccer fields and basketball courts to Veteran's Memorial Park.
- **Pico Rivera.** City of Pico Rivera's *General Plan* (1993) proposes to investigate the use of electrical transmission corridors for pedestrian and bicycle trails and, linear park systems
- **South Gate.** City of South Gate's *General Plan* (1986) proposes to: establish a city-wide system of smaller neighborhood parks, rather than develop large parks; promote the acquisition of additional park land in the Westside Planning Area; and create a neighborhood "Adopt a Park" program designed to encourage citizen involvement and participation in the maintenance and upkeep of their neighborhood parks.
- **Paramount.** City of Paramount's *General Plan* (1990) proposes exploring the use of power line easements for recreational purposes.
- **Bell Gardens.** City of Bell Garden's *General Plan* (1991) proposes to expand the city's program of acquiring small remnants of vacant land for the development of mini-parks, adjacent to existing corridors.
- **Downey.** City of Downey's *General Plan* (1992) proposes to upgrade Rio Hondo Country Club. City of Downey is evaluating the possibility of linking LARIO Trail to San Gabriel River bicycle trail.
- **Long Beach.** City of Long Beach's *General Plan* (1991) proposes considering establishment of a convenience facility adjacent to De Forest Avenue, north of Willow Street. The facility would include a rest area for bicyclists and equestrians, and a parking lot.

It should be noted that the above general plans offer no comprehensive, coordinated plan for recreational uses along the proposed project reaches (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1994b).

5.15.2 Existing Conditions

Recreational facilities along the Los Angeles River include 26 neighborhood parks, 11 community parks, 4 regional parks, and 6 golf courses. Tennis and racquetball facilities, picnic areas, ballfields, and equestrian facilities are also located in the proposed project vicinity (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1988). Park areas running along the Los Angeles River range from small, local community parks and playgrounds to large city and regional parks such as Griffith Park and Elysian Park. Regional bicycle paths and equestrian trails make up the adjacent trail system. Recreational facilities do not include water contact sports or fishing (Los Angeles County Department of Public Works 1994a).

The LARIO Trail, an asphalt bicycle path, is located along the top of the River's eastern levee, from its confluence with the Rio Hondo Channel (Channel) south to the Pacific Ocean. A dirt equestrian trail also runs along the bottom of the River's eastern levee from its confluence with the Channel south to Willow Street, and separated, where possible, from the bicycle path, though sometimes only by a narrow unpaved strip of earth. Often the equestrian trails end at undercrossings and horses must share the path at that point with bikes and pedestrians. In many areas the equestrian and bike trails share the same black-topped trail.

Access points to the LARIO Trail have been designated by the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation at the following locations: Imperial Highway, Hollydale Park, Rosecrans Avenue, Ralph Dills Parks, Coolidge Park, Del Amo Boulevard, Wardlow Road, Willow Street, Pacific Coast Highway, and Ocean Boulevard. Access to the Trail from other locations is restricted by chain link fences (Los Angeles County Department of Public Works 1994a).

5.15.3 Significance Threshold

The threshold for determining if significant impacts on recreation would occur is based on Appendix G of the *California Environmental Quality Act Statutes and Guidelines*. The likelihood for significant impacts on recreation to occur was evaluated based on the potential for the proposed project to result in:

- Conflict with established recreational uses of the area.

5.15.4 Impact Analysis

Providing a variety of recreational opportunities along the River in a safe environment is a specific goal of the *Los Angeles River Master Plan Final Report* set forth by the Corps and LACDPW. A survey sponsored by Rebuild Los Angeles documented the need for recreational amenities in urban Los Angeles. Parks, recreation, and adult sports programs were voted as "absolutely critical" or "important" needs by 77 percent of Los Angeles residents. Access to close-to-home parks and open-space can benefit the millions of urban residents that typically do not travel great distances to county, state, and federal parks and forest (Los Angeles County Departments of Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Regional Planning 1996).

The proposed project elements provide improved opportunities for a variety of outdoor recreational experiences consistent with the Corp's policies for flood control management, the Los Angeles County

General Plan policies of the Open Space/Conservation Element and local jurisdiction policies regarding recreational uses. The proposed project elements will enhance the adjacent land of the River and the Wash with respect to promoting quality, passive, outdoor recreation. Project elements include: development of a network of trails along the River and improvement of existing trails; striping and signage projects; improvement of access to the River; connection of recreational facilities to the LARIO Trail; construction of bicycle crossings; development of interpretive sites focusing on topics specific to that location; acquisition of easements for recreation; development of four demonstration projects; and enhancement of public safety through site design and educational programs.

Site specific economic development projects, including bike and skate rentals, food concessions, and open air markets have been recommended for thirteen locations in the cities of Long Beach, Paramount, South Gate, Cudahy, Bell, Maywood, and Los Angeles. The recommended economic development projects in Long Beach are consistent with *General Plan* recommendations directed toward enhancing facilities for bicyclists. Similarly, the proposed economic development project in the City of Paramount is consistent with the *General Plan* objective of providing enhance recreation opportunities in conjunction with existing utility easements. The proposed addition of bike and skate rentals at Hollydale Park in South Gate is consistent with *General Plan* objectives of focussing on development and enhancement of local parks.

Proposed park improvements in the City of Long Beach (north of Artesia Blvd.), City of Los Angeles (Downey Playground expansion; Broadway St.; Corn Fields; Riverside Park; and mini-park near Victory Plaza) are consistent with the local *General Plan* designations.

The proposed facilities are designed to be ADA accessible.

Detours and signs will be used during construction of bicycle trail improvements to avoid impacts on existing recreation users. The *Los Angeles River Master Plan* will not have a negative affect on other surrounding or existing recreational uses, but rather will enhance these already existing recreational areas.

5.15.5 Mitigation

The proposed project will not result in significant impacts on recreation, therefore no mitigation measures are necessary.