



City of La Verne

NEWS RELEASE
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La Verne Approves Wilderness Area Management and Public Access Plan Final Environmental Impact Report

LA VERNE, CA – At its [meeting on September 19](#), the La Verne City Council adopted Resolution 22-72, approving the [Wilderness Area Management and Public Access Plan](#) and certifying its Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR). La Verne’s Wilderness Area Management and Public Access Plan includes selective habitat enhancement actions, identifies public safety hazards, highlights public access opportunities and includes goals for specific physical improvements or management policies for the Wilderness Area.

“This process has been years in the making and we are pleased this is coming to fruition,” said Mayor Tim Hepburn. “The plan will be the guide to maintain, clear and monitor the Wilderness Area. We appreciate staff’s dedication to keeping the Council and community informed and their commitment to continue moving this plan forward.”

In 2006, the City acquired 208 acres in north La Verne through state grant funds obtained in cooperation with the County of Los Angeles, the Trust for Public Land and the La Verne Land Conservancy. This land was combined with 150 acres already owned by the City to create a 358 acre open space preserve known as the Wilderness Area.

The grant funds used to acquire the Wilderness Area were dedicated to restore property for parks and park safety, senior recreation facilities and other improvements and recreational opportunities. Conditions in the grant funding included stipulations requiring reasonable public access, except in cases where access could interfere with resource protection, and prohibiting flood control projects within the grant lands. In order to fulfill the land acquisition grant requirements, the La Verne Wilderness Area Management and Public Access Plan was prepared to address the resolution of wildlife conservation, public access and habitat management issues.

In 2015, the City began the process for the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and development of the plan. Due to other community issues that came during this time, including large development projects then the COVID-19 pandemic, the project was again stalled and never made it to Council for its final adoption.

The La Verne Planning Commission played a key role in advancing the Wilderness Area Management plan and recommended that the City roll it out in two phases. The first phase focuses primarily on the maintenance, security and protection of the Wilderness Area, while Phase 2 includes the planning and development of increased public access to the area. Phase 2 will only move forward with proper notification to La Verne residents and ultimately another vote of the City Council.



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Since a considerable amount of time passed since the Planning Commission initially recommended the plan's approval in 2019 and new Council members may not be aware of the proposed plan, [staff held a study session in August 2022](#) to present the project in its entirety.

"Though it is important for this plan to move forward, it is crucial that everyone stays informed throughout this process," said Principal Planner Candice Bowcock. "We are pleased the EIR is finalized, and we appreciate the feedback received throughout the public comment period."

The final EIR was reviewed for completeness and adequacy and all impacts were defined as 'less than significant' or 'less than significant with mitigation incorporated'. In addition to the Council study session, property owners within and beyond 300 feet of the site received public hearing notices via mail. For more information and to view the Wilderness Area Management and Public Access Plan, visit [the City's website](#).

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