


CITY OF LOS ANGELES
Department of Recreation and Parks

August 1, 2024

TO: Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners

FROM: Jimmy Kim,
General Manager 

SUBJECT: Arroyo Seco Water Reuse Project

SUMMARY

The Arroyo Seco Water Reuse Project is a joint project between the Cities of Pasadena and South Pasadena, with Pasadena being the lead agency. The project consists of two locations along the Arroyo Seco Channel that will address water quality issues and assist in complying with a state-mandated requirement to reduce the bacteria levels from tributaries that flow into the Los Angeles River.

Through sampling of the outlets to the channel in dry weather conditions, San Rafael Creek and the Arroyo Seco Channel are two segments that have been identified to consistently have bacteria levels above the allowable limits set by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board for fresh waters designated for recreational use. This project will aid in reducing the bacteria load flowing into the Los Angeles River utilizing nature-based approaches to the best extent feasible.

The Cities of Pasadena and South Pasadena received a \$3.5 million grant from the State of California, Department of Parks and Recreation's Urban Counties Per Capita Program, under a subprogram specifically designated for the Arroyo Seco. The Cities received additional funding through Los Angeles County's Safe, Clean Water Program (Measure W) for \$4.7 million. Together, these grants will fully fund the project through construction.

For more information, see the Arroyo Seco Water Reuse Project website: <https://www.cityofpasadena.net/public-works/engineering-and-construction/construction/arroyo-seco-water-reuse-project/>

Proposed Project

City of Pasadena Department of Public Works is proposing to construct a stormwater capture project. The proposed Project consists of two regional stormwater capture and treatment facilities, also referred to as Best Management Practices (BMPs), located within existing open space areas near the Arroyo Seco Channel. The Project would provide water quality benefits for multiple jurisdictions within the 5,005-acre drainage area of the two BMP sites.

The two Project Sites are described below:

San Rafael Site:

Lower Arroyo Seco southwest of the San Rafael Avenue overpass of the Arroyo Seco Channel at the southern border of the City of Pasadena.

San Pascual Site:

Lower Arroyo Seco southeast of the San Pascual Avenue overpass of the Arroyo Seco Channel between the channel and Stoney Drive in the Cities of South Pasadena and Los Angeles.

The Project sites are located within the Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR) Watershed. Runoff from this watershed drains to over 50 linear miles of the Los Angeles River and then to the Pacific Ocean. The Arroyo Seco Channel is a major tributary to the Los Angeles River. On July 9, 2010, the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) adopted resolution No. R10-007 incorporating a total maximum daily load (TMDL) for indicator bacteria in the Los Angeles River watershed. A TMDL is the calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant allowed to enter a waterbody so that the waterbody will meet and continue to meet water quality standards.

Outfalls along the Arroyo Seco Channel were modeled for indicator bacteria and the San Rafael Creek outfall was identified as a priority outfall having bacteria levels which consistently exceed allowed limits. A Load Reduction Strategy (LRS) was developed for the watershed and the proposed LRS for the two locations in the Arroyo Seco Channel is to remove 100% of the dry weather flows for treatment. Runoff in San Rafael Creek would be diverted into the San Rafael project site, treated, and a portion infiltrated for groundwater recharge. Treated runoff would then be discharged into the Arroyo Seco Channel and diverted into the San Pascual project site. The runoff would go through additional treatment and a portion would be stored and reused for irrigation of South Pasadena's Arroyo Seco Golf Course located approximately 1,000 feet south of the San Pascual site.

In addition to fulfilling regulatory obligations to provide cleaner water in the Arroyo Seco and Los Angeles River channels, other Project benefits include increased habitat and reestablishment of natural plant communities, improved trails and public access to open space areas, and educational opportunities utilizing interpretive materials focused on hydrology and native habitat.

City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks' (RAP) Role in the proposed Project

RAP owns a portion of land within the boundaries of the proposed San Pascual site. In Fall 2021, the cities of Pasadena and South Pasadena approached RAP requesting to use RAP property for the aforementioned Project.

RAP and the cities of Pasadena and South Pasadena are currently developing a lease agreement for use of the RAP's property and for the design and maintenance of the proposed Project. See below the anticipated roles and responsibilities for each City:

RAP

- Grant access of the property to the cities of Pasadena and South Pasadena for the construction and maintenance of the Project
- RAP will issue a Right of Entry permit to the cities of Pasadena and South Pasadena for the construction and maintenance of the Project

- The Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners (Board) shall approve the Project final plans and accept the improvements upon the completion of construction
- RAP shall not be financially responsible for any portion of the Project

Pasadena

- Shall be responsible for the design and construction of the proposed Project and coordinating any and all necessary approvals for the Project
- Submission of the final plans and any changes to the final plans to the RAP Board for approval prior to the commencement of construction.
- Providing the “as-built” drawings for the Project reflecting any changes from the final approved plans prior to the Board’s final acceptance of the Project.
- Providing on-site archeological monitoring for the duration of the Project construction.
- Provide quarterly updates about the Project’s progress during construction in writing to RAP
- Mitigation of any trees required to be removed in order to implement the Project

South Pasadena

- Maintenance of the above ground and below ground improvements installed as part of the Project for 30 years

The anticipated lease agreement requires City Attorney approval and RAP Board approval.

Project Updates (provided by the City of Pasadena)

- Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) - The MND was completed in November 2023 and the Notice of Intent (NOI) was released to the public on November 22, 2023. The review period of the documents was extended from 30 days to 55 days due to the upcoming holidays. The public comment period ended on January 15, 2024. During the public comment period, four comments were received. Over the next several months, Pasadena’s environmental consultant drafted responses to the comments received, and prepared the "Response to Comments, Clarifications, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program" document. Once reviews of that document were complete, Pasadena went to its City Council for adoption of both documents on June 17, 2024 and the Notice of Determination was filed on June 21, 2024. Pasadena needed to move forward with the adoption of the MND as the regulatory agencies would not allow them to submit our applications for permit until the NOD was filed.
- Construction documents for the Project - The contracts and task orders are in place and the field investigations needed are complete. Pasadena expects to get 100% plans for review from its design consultant by the end of August 2024.
- Two public meetings on the project have been held, the first meeting was on May 26, 2022 in Pasadena and the second meeting was held on April 27, 2023 in South Pasadena.
- A public scoping meeting for the MND was held on December 14, 2023 in Pasadena, approximately 3 weeks after the release of the NOI.

The Project and Water Rights (provided by Cities of Pasadena and South Pasadena)

The Arroyo Seco channel originates in the Angeles National Forest, flows primarily upstream of the project through the City of Pasadena and enters into the City of Los Angeles approximately

one mile upstream of an existing diversion. The diversion was constructed in the 1950's and an agreement was established between the City of South Pasadena and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District to officially allow the continuation of the diverting of water from the Arroyo Seco Channel (water diversion existed prior to the official agreement in the 1950's) to use the water for irrigation and recreational purposes. This agreement has been in place for over seven decades and the Project will maintain this existing diversion conveyance for the same uses, and will also be enhanced by the project to further clean the water being diverted from the channel to help meet bacteria compliance mandates issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. There is an existing underground pipe (to remain) from the diversion, that runs through RAP's parcel underground, and then outlets on RAP's parcel to an open stream that then runs to, and through the City of South Pasadena's parcel. Some water is currently being diverted to the golf course and some of the water returns to the channel. For the most part, that is what will continue to happen with the exception of where the water currently daylight above ground; additional underground piping, a pump, and additional treatment devices will be placed in line for some initial cleaning of the water prior to it flowing above ground into the treatment basins. The Project is not creating a new situation, just improving the existing condition as the wetlands have not been maintained, and several invasive tree species exist in that area.

Access (provided by the City of Pasadena)

The wetlands area is currently accessible but difficult to navigate. There are no designated paths in the interior of the wetlands and there is a lot of overgrowth and organic debris. Post construction there will be complete access to the area with paths on the east and west sides (essentially around the entire perimeter) of the Project site as well as a path that traverses the center of the Project site in between the two treatment basins. The site will be easily and equally accessible by residents from all of the communities that surround the project.

Trees on RAP Property (provided by the City of Pasadena)

- Total trees existing on RAP parcel - 25
- Total proposed for removal - 15 (4 Coast Live Oak, 5 Blue Elderberry, 6 Mexican Fan Palm [invasive])- 9 total protected trees per Section 17.02 of LAMC (4 Oaks and 5 Blue)
- Trees to remain - 10 (6 Coastal Live Oak, 4 Western Sycamore)
- Tree replacements proposed - 38 minimum to 45 maximum. Variation is due to additional trees that may be required by California Department of Fish and Wildlife but it will not be known until the Project is farther along in the permitting process

Attachments

- 1) ZIMAS Map showing RAP Parcel
- 2) Map of RAP property in relation to Project
- 3) Project Renderings

ATTACHMENT 1

ZIMAS INTRANET

Generalized Zoning

07/24/2024

City of Los Angeles
Department of City Planning



Address: undefined

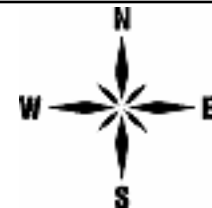
Tract: PLAT OF LAND IN THE
ARROYO SECO BELONGING TO
THE SAN GABRIEL ORANGE GROVE
ASSOCIATION

Zoning: OS-1XL

APN: 5493038900
PIN #: 156A237 26

Block: None
Lot: PT 64
Arb: 1

General Plan: Open Space





Address: undefined

APN: 5493038900
PIN #: 156A237 26

Tract: PLAT OF LAND IN THE
ARROYO SECO BELONGING TO
THE SAN GABRIEL ORANGE GROVE
ASSOCIATION

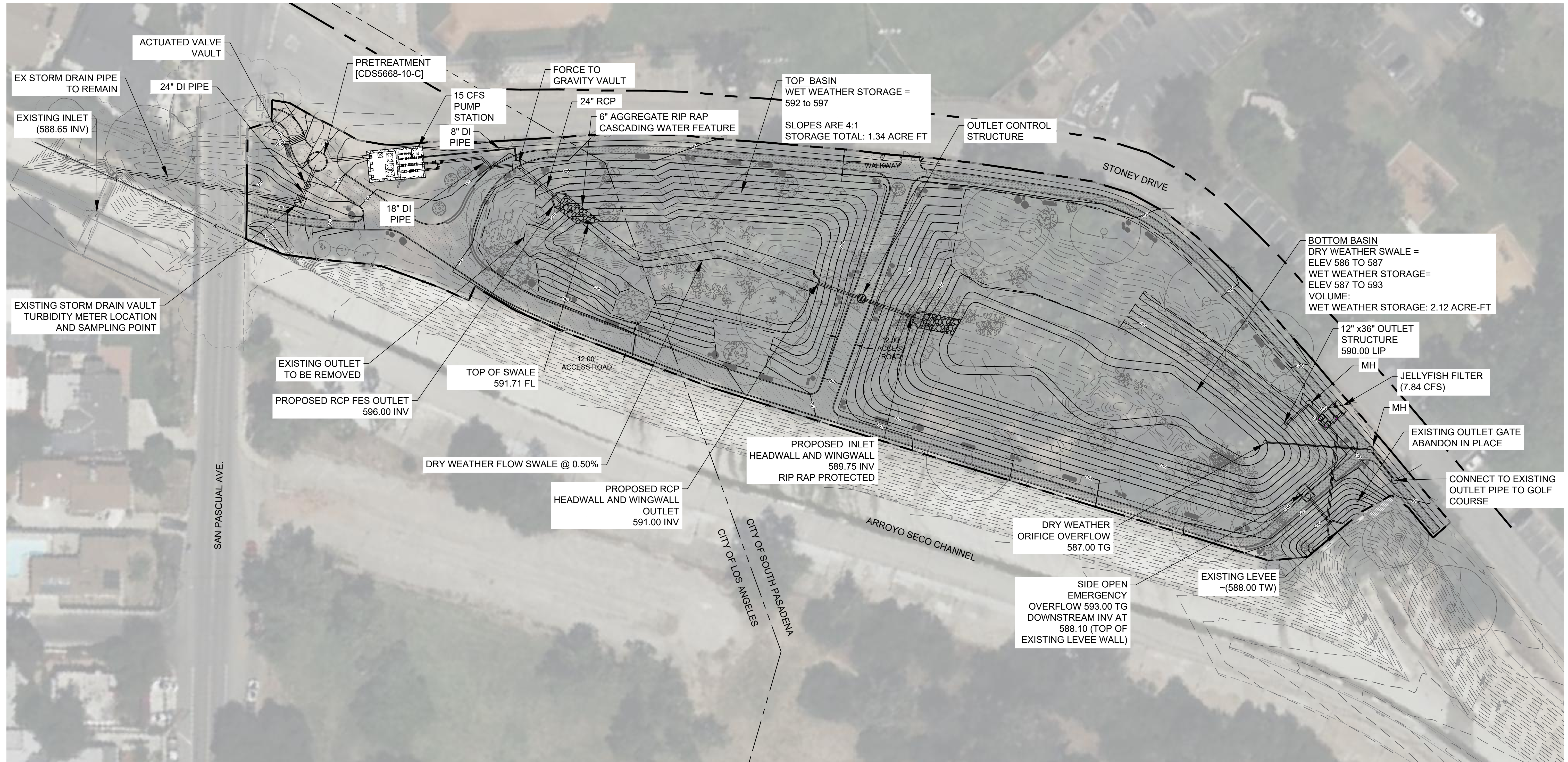
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Lot: PT 64
Arb: 1

Zoning: OS-1XL

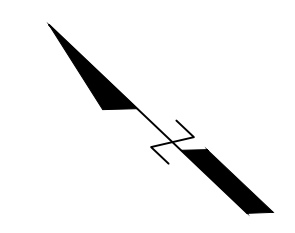
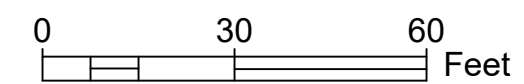
General Plan: Open Space



ATTACHMENT 2



PRELIMINARY -NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION
06/03/2024



DRAWN BY AMT		REVISIONS				CITY OF PASADENA-DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS			
DESIGNED BY AMT	CHECKED BY CAS	MARK	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY	CHKD	APPROVED	PROJECT SAN PASCUAL REGIONAL STORMWATER CAPTURE PROJECT	SHEET SP-C-1
								SHEET TITLE SITE PLAN	52 OF 95
								SCALE AS SHOWN	ACCOUNT NUMBER XXXXXX
								DWG. NO.	

Date: April 22, 2020 W:\PROJECTS\CITY OF PASADENA\20-138 ARROYO SECO WATER REUSE & NATURAL STREAM RESTORATION\CAD\SAN_PASCUAL\FINAL PLOTS\C2_SAN_PASCUAL-SITE.DWG



San Pascual Site



LEGEND

- ① Decomposed Granite Path
- ② Concrete Path
- ③ Reclaimed Wood Log Bench
- ④ Informational Sign
- ⑤ Concrete Seatwall
- ⑥ Vehicular Gate
- ⑦ Post and Rail Fence

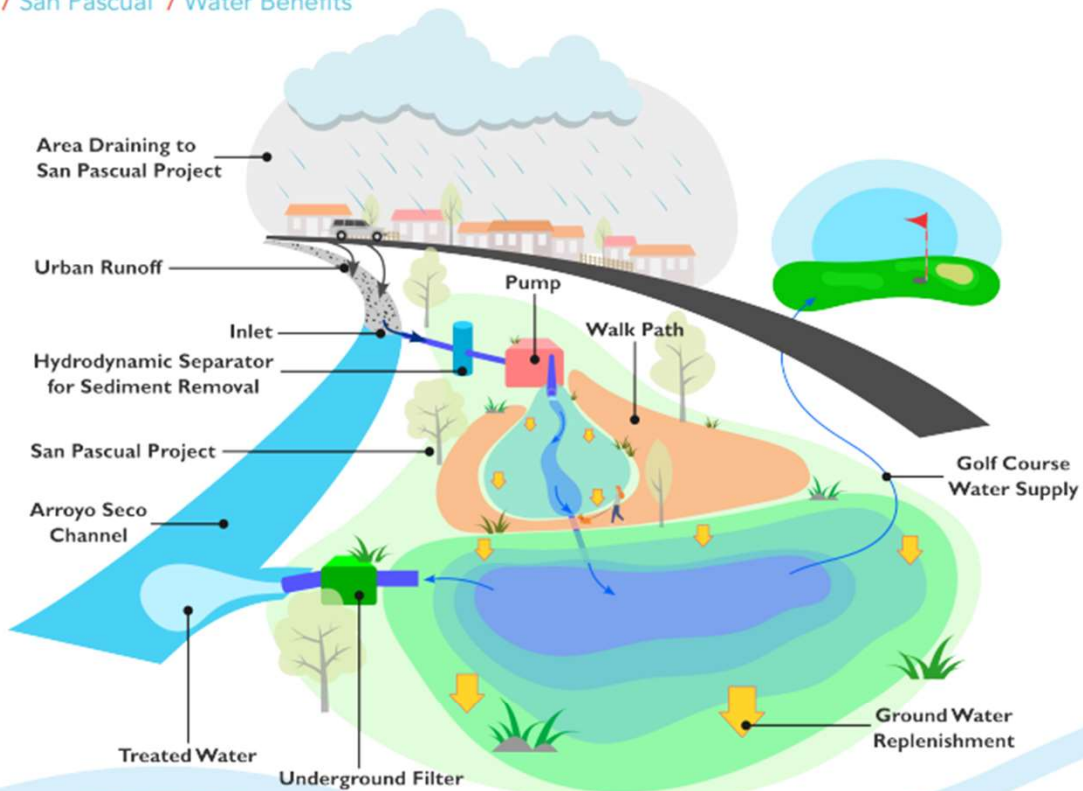
TREE DISPOSITION PLAN

- Existing Tree to Remain
- Existing Tree to Remove



San Pascual Site

Site 2 / San Pascual / Water Benefits



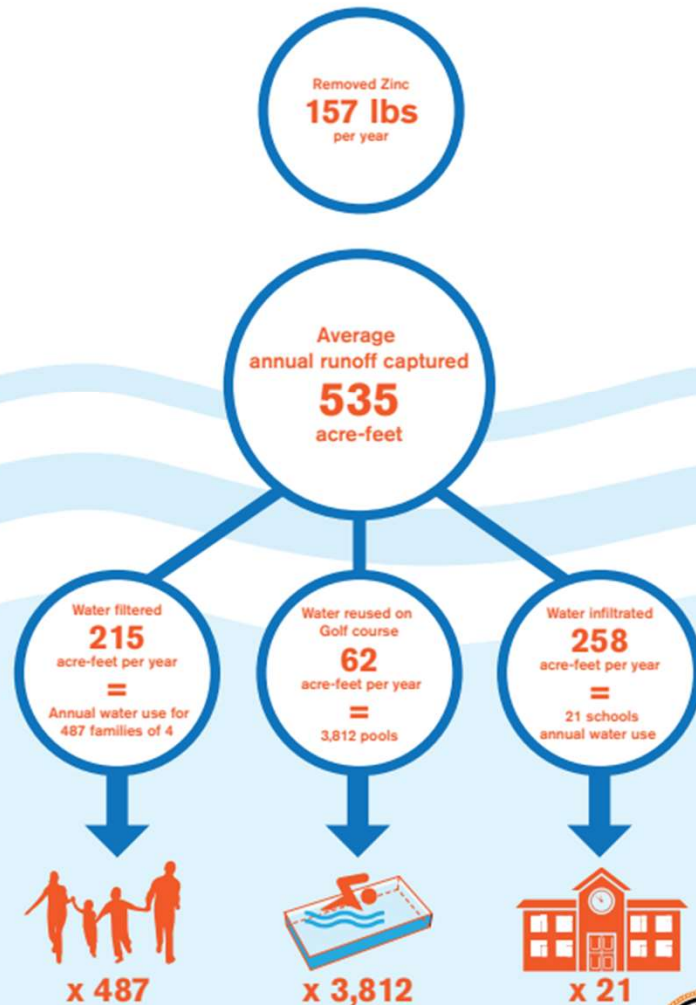
Treated dry weather flows
153 gallons
per minute
= 246 Square Feet of lawn irrigation per minute



Diverted runoff
6,732 gallons
per minute
= the flow rate of 518 garden hose



Storage volume
1,127,446 gallons
= 3.5 Football fields with 1ft of ponded water



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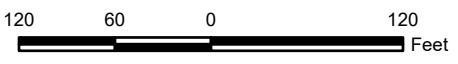
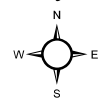


Aerial Source: Esri, Maxar 2022

San Pascual Site Construction Footprint

Exhibit 17b

Arroyo Seco Water Reuse and Natural Stream Restoration Project



(Rev: 11-17-2023 JVR) R:\Projects\3PAS_Pasaden\3PAS010750\Graphics\MND\ex_Impacts_SanRafael.pdf