



# Media Release

## ***State-funded stormwater project to improve water quality, transform vacant SoCal lot into vibrant park***

### ***Green infrastructure project bolsters Los Angeles River restoration effort***

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**South Gate** – Today, the State Water Resources Control Board, the City of South Gate and other partners celebrated the completion of an innovative green infrastructure project that will divert and store stormwater under a former industrial site, improving water quality in the nearby Los Angeles River. The multi-benefit project, which will also spur groundwater recharge and offer new recreational opportunities in a disadvantaged community, was funded in part by an \$8 million grant from the State Water Board's [Stormwater Grant Program](#).

"This stormwater capture project is a perfect example of how nature-based solutions can transform urban runoff into a resource that builds water resilience," said Nichole Morgan, State Water Board member. "By prioritizing stormwater capture and groundwater recharge, and investing in green infrastructure, we can help secure the future of California's municipal water supplies while also improving water quality and giving back to the community."

Located between a concrete-lined section of the river and Interstate 710, the Urban Orchard Project will divert millions of gallons of stormwater and urban runoff each year from the Bandini Channel into newly created wetlands and other permeable surfaces. These natural features act as sponges, filtering runoff and limiting contaminants and trash from reaching the river, which is on the state's list of impaired or threatened waters. The [project](#) will also establish a permanent, 30-acre multi-use community space for the city's 100,000 residents.

"The Urban Orchard Park is more than just a new green space, it's a symbol of South Gate's commitment to sustainability, community wellness and revitalizing our natural environment," said Maria Davila, South Gate mayor. "This project transforms a former industrial site into a vibrant public space where families can gather, children can play, and our community can thrive for generations to come."

In addition to the board's \$8 million grant, the Urban Orchard Project received support from a variety of sources, including the Land and Water Conservation Fund and Trust for Public Land.



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD

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“The Urban Orchard Project is a national model for how partnership and strategic planning can curb some of the most pressing issues of our time,” said Nola Eaglin Talmage, Trust for Public Land program director. “The 200 fruit trees, educational garden, storm water infrastructure, wetland, walking paths and long-term job opportunities are all testimony to how non-profits, donors, city leaders and agencies can partner to achieve shared goals even amidst challenging economic times.”

Urban [stormwater](#) runoff can pick up contaminants like oils, pesticides, heavy metals, and other chemicals that are present on urban surfaces such as streets, rooftops, parking garages, parks and sidewalks. This untreated runoff can harm the water quality of California’s diverse array of waterbodies. South Gate’s project will divert stormwater into wetlands and bioswales, filtering out some of the contaminants that previously flowed into the Los Angeles River.

Increasing stormwater capture is a key component of Gov. Gavin Newsom’s [Water Supply Strategy](#) and the board continues to provide local agencies with resources to improve their stormwater systems. Since 2014, the board has committed \$186 million in Proposition 1 funding to stormwater projects around the state, including \$55 million to those in Los Angeles County. Approved by voters in 2014, Proposition 1 authorized \$7.5 billion in general obligation bonds for water projects including surface and groundwater storage, ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration, and drinking water protection.

More information about the board’s financial assistance can be found on its [website](#).



*State Water Board Member Nichole Morgan (third from lower left) celebrates the opening of Urban Orchard Park with state, local and community partners.*

*The State Water Board's mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper resource allocation and efficient use for present and future generations.*