

ERIC GARCETTI
MAYOR

June 29, 2015

Anne Dove, Project Manager
National Park Service
Rim of the Valley Corridor Study
570 W. Avenue 26, No. 175
Los Angeles, CA 90065

Dear Ms. Dove:

I write in response to the request for comments on the National Park Service's *Rim of the Valley Corridor Draft Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment* and in strong support for an alternative that will achieve the most sustainable wildlife corridors and habitat linkages with the most equitable access to nature, recreation and cultural resources.

While I am encouraged to see that the Los Angeles River is included in the Study's proposed Alternatives C and D, I believe that another alternative should be selected—one that expands upon Alternative D by including the river's tributaries also (see attached). The tributaries are the key biodiversity lifelines connecting the river, the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, the Angeles National Forest and the San Gabriel National Monument. They are critical for wildlife to flourish because they provide safe movement and refuge space in the urban context and their preservation will help stem habitat fragmentation and biodiversity loss. They also provide vital opportunities for safer access to nature and recreation for our diverse population, which includes many historically-disadvantaged communities and a growing proportion of older and mobility-challenged Angelenos.

As you know, the history of our region is closely tied to the Los Angeles River; it is the reason El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Ángeles de Porciúncula was established. El Pueblo is still preserved and cherished as a sacred monument. The more comprehensive alternative I am proposing will honor both El Pueblo and the Los Angeles River watershed and also reinforce:

- Habitat restoration in one of only five global Mediterranean-type climate regions (This type covers only 2% of the earth's surface, but accounts for more than 20% of its plant species.) and within the globally significant Pacific Flyway and California Floristic Province (one of Conservation International's top 25 biodiversity loss hotspots—the only one in the United States);
- The Urban Waters Federal Partnership's selection of the Los Angeles River watershed as a national priority and its collaborations, such as more meaningfully connecting to the US Forest Service's Angeles National Forest and the US Army Corps of Engineers' ecosystem restoration projects on the tributaries;
- Education about the expedition of Juan Bautista de Anza as the City prepares to certify the historic trail later this year, recognizing that the path was approximate and likely intersected with present-day tributaries also;
- Stewardship values in young people by providing easier access to hundreds of schools within the vicinity of the river's tributaries—consistent with the President's America's Great Outdoors initiative and "Every Kid in a Park" campaign and the First Lady's Let's Move initiative;
- Local cultural preservation work of El Pueblo, including its partnership with the Western National Parks Association to establish a new visitor center in the Hellman Quon Building in 2016;
- Recreational opportunities for millions more people in historically-underserved urban neighborhoods; and
- Feasibility, because the partners who cooperatively manage the Santa Monica Mountains Recreation Area are currently converting publicly-owned tributaries into parkways that will benefit communities with over 250 miles of trails when completed.

The Rim of the Valley Corridor study provides four alternatives for addressing the future of the SMMNRA. I support a fifth, **ALTERNATIVE D plus the Los Angeles River's tributaries**, because it not only feasibly protects the largest amount of natural and cultural resources, but also ensures the greatest chance for our sustainable urban future in the face of global climate change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Garcetti". The signature is stylized and includes a horizontal line extending to the right.

ERIC GARCETTI
Mayor

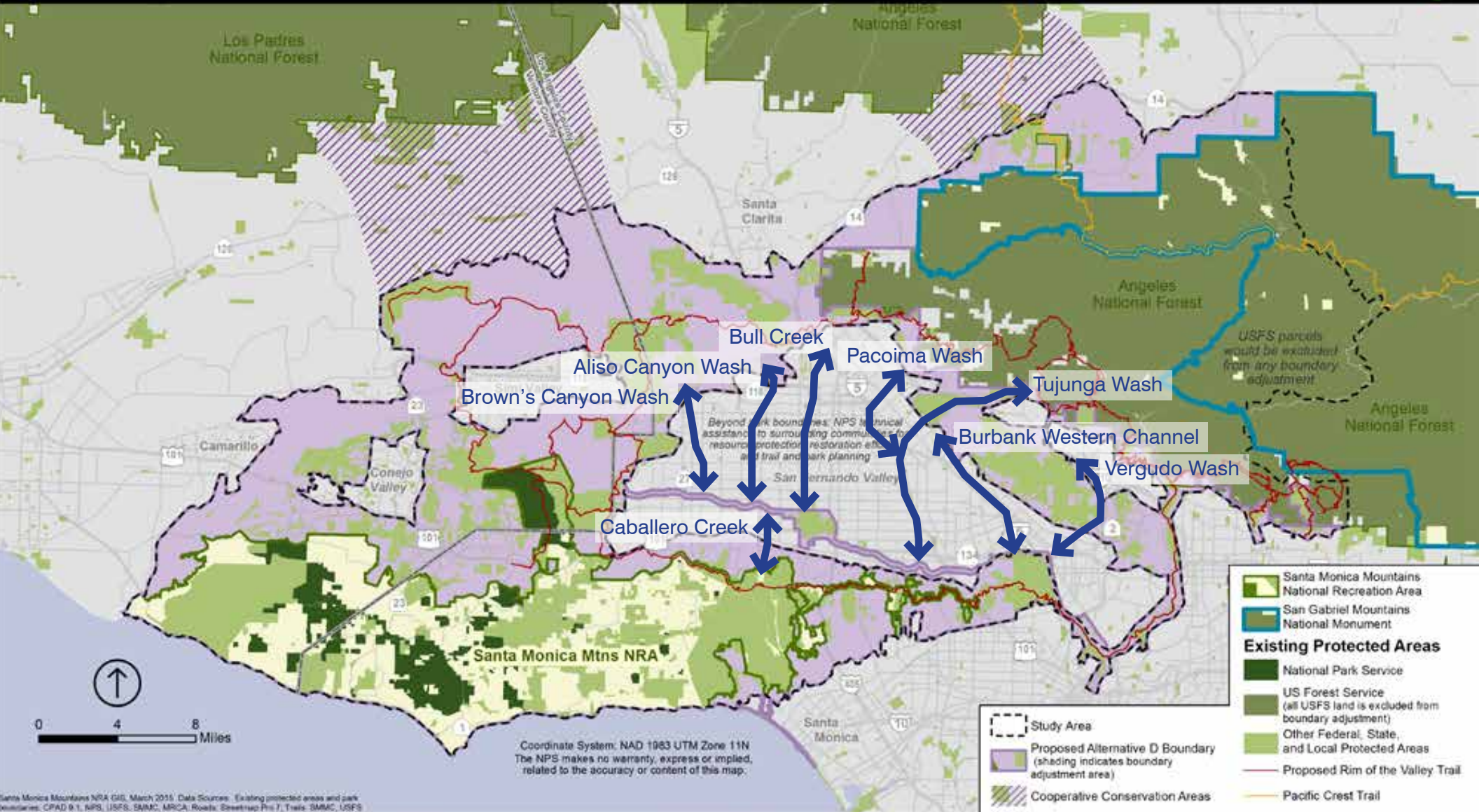
Alt D + Tributaries

Not to Scale

Alternative D

Regional Rim of the Valley Boundary Adjustment and Cooperative Conservation Areas

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Santa Monica Mountains NRA GIS, March 2015. Data Sources: Existing protected areas and park boundaries: CPAD 9.1, NPS, USFS, SMMC, MRCA; Roads: Streetmap Pro 7; Trails: SMMC, USFS