Where We Are Tells Us Where We're Going Abstracts

***Supply and Demand: Housing in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles*,** Kim Hernandez, UCLA

Massive migration of moderate income earners to Los Angeles took place in early-20th century. These people were "homeseekers" hoping to take advantage of low-cost home-buying opportunities made available through small development and finance companies that emerged in the wake of development by elite city builders. New towns, several in the San Gabriel Valley, competed with one another in luring these homeseekers with facilities and services that promoters of each town believed demonstrated their community was stable, affordable, wholesome, morally upright, and growing economically. Thus, every town had, or promised to have, low property tax and utility rates, at least one bank, several churches, good schools, and budding industry for a promising local economy. Homeseekers saw these amenities as essential, not only for their own expectations in a home community but also for the growth and prosperity of the community, which would ultimately translate into rising property values. In a wildly volatile economic period that began with emergence from deep depression in the late 1890s, plummeted again in the "Panic" of 1907, and ended with another deep depression in 1913, homeseekers banked on the rising value of property in Los Angeles to provide security. Additionally, in an age before retirement pensions and the social safety net of Social Security, homeseekers saw their small real estate investments as means to provide for their future retirement and a nest egg to provide upward mobility for their growing families. In answering the question of how we got to where we are in order to determine where we're going, it's important to note the competitive and isolated nature of nascent communities trying to outshine one another for the small investor's economic and social commitment. Pooling resources for the benefit of all was not foremost on the minds of most civic leaders or small investors seeking homes in budding communities. Thus, we do not want this historic pattern to discourage long-term, cooperative solutions. Rather, the task is to continue to find ways to bridge historic divides between communities when managing our natural resources.

Historic Wetlands: Seeing the future by Looking Pre-Modification: Historic Ecology as a Tool for Informing Restoration Planning*, *Eric D. Stein

Historical wetland losses are often cited as a motivation for prioritizing wetland restoration. Historical ecology is a valuable (yet underutilized) tool that can help inform restoration planning by helping us understand the mechanisms of past decline, providing templates for future restoration, and serving as context for making decisions about resource allocation. The utility of historical ecological analysis is illustrated for the San Gabriel River to assess wetland losses since the period of California annexation (ca. 1850) and to identify current restoration opportunities. Numerous data sources were used to gain insight into historical wetland and riparian habitats, including Mexican land grant sketches, US General Land Office maps, irrigation maps, topographic maps and soil surveys, and 1920's aerial photographs. Secondary data sources included oral histories, ground photographs, field notes, and herbaria records. Data sources were digitized, georeferenced, and overlaid in GIS to produce historical wetland polygons.

Polygons were attributed for data sources, classified using the National Wetland Inventory system to facilitate comparison with contemporary conditions, and assigned a confidence rating based on the certainty in the primary data sources. Concordance between multiple data sources supported inferences about historical condition. Results of the analysis revealed that up to 86% of historic wetlands have been lost; the greatest losses are the near total elimination of extensive alkali flats and seasonal wetlands that once dominated the lower river floodplain. Despite the dramatic wetland losses, several opportunities exist for wetland restoration where remnant wetlands and/or wetland signatures exist. Furthermore, reconstructed plant communities provide templates for design of future restoration projects.

Working within the legacy of agency and infrastructure, Mark Pestrella, LA County DPW

Implementing watershed management solutions within the largest county in the nation, the Los Angeles County Flood Control District must juggle a variety of competing demands on behalf of its nine million residents. From protecting the quality of local surface waters to delivering ample opportunities for water conservation, recreation, and wildlife habitat, the challenge of providing these public benefits is readily apparent within the landscape of the 640 sq mile San Gabriel River Watershed. In 2004, the Flood Control District and its regional stakeholders adopted the San Gabriel River Corridor Master Plan. This comprehensive planning document outlines the challenges that face the San Gabriel River and its major tributaries—Walnut Creek, San Jose Creek, Coyote Creek—as well as the potential for increasing our local water supplies to meet the needs of a growing population. Working together, the stakeholders of the San Gabriel River Watershed will continue to keep this river system a vital public resource.

Acting alongside the demands of economic and social activity**,** Doug Failing, CalTrans District Director at District 7

California is composed of many watersheds – each with unique water resources and needs for the water by different stakeholders. Protecting the environment is a top priority at Caltrans when building new highways and facilities and stormwater management and water quality problems in a watershed are therefore better solved when all stakeholders participate cooperatively to find solutions. Through its unique approach to watershed management and transportation development, Caltrans is able to implement projects that not only promote the health of the San Gabriel River Watershed, but that also promote the burgeoning economy of this valuable community. Caltrans can play an integral role in connecting the people of the region to their most precious natural resource – the San Gabriel River.