

Introduced by Senator Pavley

(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Fuentes)

(Coauthors: Senators De León, Lieu, Liu, and Lowenthal)

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Blumenfield, Butler, Gatto, and Portantino)

June 26, 2012

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 101—Relative to the Los Angeles River revitalization.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SCR 101, as introduced, Pavley. Los Angeles River revitalization.

This measure would declare that the Legislature honors and commends the commitment, energy, vision, and leadership demonstrated by local, regional, state, and federal government agencies, as well as nonprofit and civic groups, organizations, and associations, in the creation of parks and the restoration of natural habitats along the Los Angeles River and its San Fernando Valley tributaries.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The history of the City of Los Angeles and the
2 County of Los Angeles and the surrounding environs is intimately
3 tied to the Los Angeles River, as the river provided fresh water to
4 the Tongva and Tataviam living near it for thousands of years, and
5 to the Spanish who established the city’s earliest settlements next
6 to the river for the same reason; and

7 WHEREAS, The San Fernando Valley is surrounded by the
8 Santa Monica Mountains, the Santa Susana Mountains, the San
9 Gabriel Mountains, the Simi Hills, and the Verdugo Hills; and

1 WHEREAS, The runoff from these mountains flows through
2 the many miles of the Los Angeles River’s tributaries in the San
3 Fernando Valley, including the Tujunga, Pacoima, and Verdugo
4 Washes, and the Arroyo Seco; and

5 WHEREAS, The headwaters of the Los Angeles River are in
6 Canoga Park at the confluence of Bell Creek and the Arroyo
7 Calabasas, and the river then flows east through the San Fernando
8 Valley to the Glendale Narrows as it flows toward the Pacific
9 Ocean; and

10 WHEREAS, There are numerous significant local, state, and
11 federal parks, protected wildlife habitat and mountain wilderness
12 areas, bikeways, trails, and other open space that connect to or are
13 near the Los Angeles River and its major tributaries throughout
14 the San Fernando Valley, including the Juan Bautista de Anza
15 National Historic Trail, the Santa Monica Mountains National
16 Recreation Area, the Rim of the Valley corridor and trail system,
17 the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area, and the Tujunga Wash
18 Greenway; and

19 WHEREAS, Strong flooding, particularly in 1914, 1934, and
20 1938, necessitated the creation of the Los Angeles Flood Control
21 District in 1915, and led to its ongoing partnership with the United
22 States Army Corps of Engineers to effectively manage and control
23 the river’s flood waters; and

24 WHEREAS, Encasing the Los Angeles River in concrete for
25 flood protection permitted dense urbanization of surrounding areas,
26 but caused the river to be effectively cut off from surrounding
27 communities and destroyed large areas of native riparian and
28 adjacent habitat; and

29 WHEREAS, Pioneering work by numerous public agencies,
30 community and environmental organizations, and many individuals
31 has envisioned a different future for the Los Angeles River, and
32 this work has resulted in the County of Los Angeles’ Los Angeles
33 River Master Plan in 1996 and the City of Los Angeles’ Los
34 Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan in 2007; and

35 WHEREAS, The Obama administration has made a priority of
36 the Los Angeles River through its 2011 designation of the river as
37 the United States Environmental Protection Agency Region IX
38 project for the Urban Water Federal Partnership, and its 2012
39 designation as part of the President’s America’s Great Outdoors
40 Initiative; and

1 WHEREAS, The United States Environmental Protection
2 Agency’s July 2010 designation of the Los Angeles River as a
3 “traditional navigable water” under the federal Clean Water Act
4 (33 U.S.C. Sec. 1251 et seq.) emphasizes the river’s potential to
5 provide recreational opportunities; and

6 WHEREAS, The revitalization plans call for reestablishing the
7 Los Angeles River as a focal point for the over nine million people
8 living in, as well as visitors to, the surrounding communities, with
9 a continuous greenway and trail system forming a vital link
10 between people, neighborhoods, cities, and the region; and

11 WHEREAS, The revitalization plans call for enhancing
12 multibenefit flood control and improving water quality in the Los
13 Angeles River through restoring a functional, connected ecosystem
14 with safe public access to the river and through providing open
15 space, recreational opportunities, and artistic, cultural, educational,
16 and environmental features; and

17 WHEREAS, A revitalized Los Angeles River will foster civic
18 pride, promote social justice, generate economic activity and
19 tourism, and improve the quality of life in the communities
20 surrounding the river; and

21 WHEREAS, Revitalization of the Los Angeles River has begun
22 in the San Fernando Valley, through the leadership of the Santa
23 Monica Mountains Conservancy and others, with a diverse array
24 of parks and natural habitat restoration along the river, as well as
25 its tributaries, and these areas provide important recreational
26 opportunities, water quality improvements, and other environmental
27 enhancements and a sense of community along the river; and

28 WHEREAS, Creating and fostering linkages between the
29 existing and planned parks, open space, habitat, trails, and
30 greenways along the Los Angeles River and its tributaries in the
31 San Fernando Valley is necessary to achieve the full revitalization
32 of the river and communities along its length, and will require
33 coordination and cooperation between communities, government
34 agencies, and the private sector; now, therefore, be it

35 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
36 *thereof concurring,* That the Legislature honors and commends
37 the commitment, energy, vision, and leadership demonstrated by
38 local, regional, state, and federal governments, and government
39 agencies, as well as nonprofit and civic groups, organizations, and
40 associations, in the creation of parks and the restoration of natural

1 habitats along the Los Angeles River and its San Fernando Valley
2 tributaries; and be it further

3 *Resolved*, That revitalization of the Los Angeles River will
4 create public access to the river’s trails and greenways and improve
5 mobility to the residents and communities of, and visitors to, the
6 San Fernando Valley and this multibenefit solution will
7 simultaneously improve flood control and water quality; and be it
8 further

9 *Resolved*, That a connected San Fernando Valley network of
10 parks, mountain wilderness areas, bikeways, trails, habitat, and
11 open space is achievable with linkages along the Los Angeles
12 River and its tributaries; and be it further

13 *Resolved*, That a priority should be placed on the integration,
14 coordination, and physical connectivity between Los Angeles River
15 revitalization projects and existing features, including local, state,
16 and federal trails, paths, parks, and open space, in order to achieve
17 the maximum ecological, recreational, cultural, nonmotorized
18 transportation, and educational opportunities possible in order to
19 improve the quality of life and the valley communities to the
20 greatest extent possible; and be it further

21 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
22 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.