



For Immediate Release
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Feasibility and Design Study Completed Planning the Future of the Santa Clara River Estuary and McGrath State Beach

Ventura and Oxnard, Calif. – Wishtoyo Foundation is pleased to announce the completion and public release of its Santa Clara River Estuary Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Feasibility and Design Study conducted in partnership with California State Parks and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The Project deliverables include a preferred restoration design with supporting studies, plans, and alternatives to restore 42 acres of Santa Clara River Estuary habitat needed for the survival and recovery of the endangered southern California steelhead and other native fish and birds in the area currently occupied by the McGrath State Beach campground. Providing enhanced aquatic and riparian habitats and improved ecological functions at a wide range of potential future estuary water levels, the restoration design includes a contiguous estuary lagoon in place of the current campground, structural habitat features for steelhead and tidewater goby, a protected island feature for native birds, and a fluvial high flow side channel.

In addition, the project provides for relocation of the oft flooded McGrath State Beach campground further down the beach on a degraded parcel adjacent to the restoration project. As designed, the campground would offer residents and visitors enhanced camping, coastal access, recreational opportunities, wildlife viewing, and environmental and cultural educational experiences. The reopening of the campground and provision of its unmatched coastal camping experience is also expected to benefit the local economy.

“The Estuary restoration and campground relocation project are exceptionally important to the Santa Clara River’s native and endangered species; the cultural, recreational and educational opportunities for local residents; and the well being of surrounding communities,” said Project Manager and Wishtoyo Foundation’s Water Initiative Director, Jason Weiner. “We are very pleased that a team of highly qualified restoration experts and the greater scientific community were able to move a 42 acre preferred estuary restoration design forward with confidence and support from technical and regulatory reviewers.”

“We are looking forward to implementing a plan which mitigates for the loss of camping and public access due to flooding at McGrath State Beach while enhancing these significant natural resources,” stated Richard Rozzelle, State Park Superintendent.

The feasibility study and the accompanying preferred restoration design was developed, informed, and created by restoration specialists from a highly qualified team of experts lead by cbec eco engineering that included members from WRA environmental consultants, and by an independent technical advisory committee consisting of Dr. Sean Anderson of California State University Channel Islands, Dr. Richard Ambrose of UCLA, Dr. David Jacobs of UCLA, and Mark Abramson of Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation. In addition, state, federal, local, university, private, and non profit scientific and technical experts provided input during Wishtoyo's Restoration Design Charrette and Preferred Restoration Concept meetings with over 50 attendees present per meeting. Technical experts from Wishtoyo and its Ventura Coastkeeper Program, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ventura Field office, and California State Parks Channel Coast District provided material feedback and review throughout the study.

With a budget of over \$947,000 under Wishtoyo's management, the Study was principally funded through the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Fisheries Restoration Grant Program with additional funds granted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the McGrath Trustee Council. Wishtoyo and California State Parks Channel Coast District provided in kind support.

Copies of the Feasibility Study and Preferred Restoration Design are available at:
<http://www.wishtoyo.org/santa-clara-river-estuary-restoration/>.

California State Parks

To provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation. For more information, visit www.parks.ca.gov.

The Wishtoyo Foundation

Founded in 1997, Wishtoyo is a 501(c)(3) non-profit grassroots organization with over 700 members consisting of Ventura County's diverse residents and Chumash Native Americans. Wishtoyo's mission is to preserve and protect Chumash culture, the culture of all of Ventura County's diverse communities, and the environment that our current and future generations depend upon. Wishtoyo shares traditional Chumash Native American beliefs, cultural practices, songs, dances, stories, and values with the public in its Chumash Discovery Village and through educational programs in schools to promote environmental awareness and natural resources stewardship. In 2000, Wishtoyo founded its Ventura Coastkeeper Program ("VCK"). VCK's mission is to protect, preserve, and restore the ecological integrity and water quality of Ventura County's inland and coastal waterbodies for all beings in the County's diverse community through outreach and education, restoration projects, advocacy, litigation, and community organizing and empowerment. For more information about Wishtoyo Foundation and its Ventura Coastkeeper Program Visit: www.wishtoyo.org.