



# **SAFE CLEAN WATER PROGRAM**

**Nature Based Solutions Ideas: Opening the Conversation  
December 8, 2022**

By Melina Sempill Watts  
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Photo and Logo, Los Angeles County



## Measure W says,

**Nature-Based Solutions:** A Project that utilizes natural processes that slow, detain; infiltrate or filter Stormwater or Urban Runoff. These methods may include relying predominantly on soils and vegetation; increasing the permeability of Impermeable Areas; **protecting undeveloped mountains and floodplains; creating and restoring riparian habitat and wetlands;** creating rain gardens, bioswales, and parkway basins; and enhancing soil through composting, mulching, and, planting trees and vegetation, with preference for native species. Nature-Based Solutions may also be designed to provide additional benefits such as sequestering carbon; supporting biodiversity; providing shade; and improving quality of life for surrounding communities. Nature-Based Solutions include Projects that mimic natural processes, such as green streets, spreading grounds and planted areas with water storage capacity. Nature-Based Solutions include NatureMimicking Solutions. Nature-Mimicking Solutions.



Photo by Watts

## **Nature Based Solutions Success Stories: Nature Based Solutions Project Opportunities**

Austine Racelis, Associate Civil Engineer, Los Angeles County Public Works, asked for a list of Nature Based Solutions Project Opportunities...**when Coordinator worked on a similar list for the NSMB IRWM in past years the list was at 202 projects.**

So... we'll start with some that have been suggested over the past 18 months.

# Nature Based Solutions Success Stories: Growing Water Quality Conversations

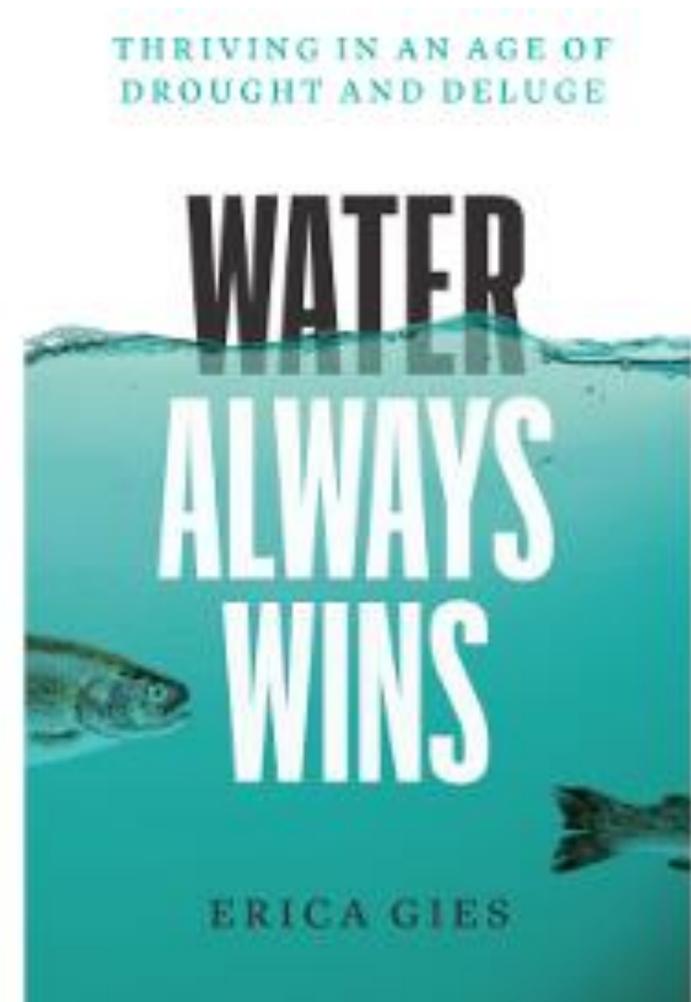
*Can we get Erica Gies to talk about the hyporheic zone to L.A. Regional Water Quality Control Board?*

“After this intervention, researchers found a total of 1900 pollutants in water coming into the restored stream. Tracking this water as it went into the restored Thornton Stream, they found that “Just flowing downstream reduced about 17 percent of the chemicals. The short stretch of the hyporheic reduced 59 percent, and the long stretch, 78 percent.”

– Erica Gies, *Water Always Wins*

“...Lynch penciled out the cost and found that piece was just \$300,000 out of the two sites’ combined \$10.5 million budget. She also argued that if the restorationists could repair a stream’s natural systems, the creek might use and move sediment on its own, ultimately saving money by reducing the need to spend an average of \$1 million a year dredging a nearby stormwater pond.”

– Erica Gies, *Water Always Wins*



*Can we get  
Dr. Jill Murray,  
Santa Barbara  
Creeks Division  
to talk about the  
balancing  
swimmable  
surfable water  
and ecosystem  
restoration and  
water quality  
with L.A.  
Regional Water  
Quality Control  
Board?*

# Nature Based Solutions Success Stories: Growing Water Quality Conversations



Photo by Watts

Dr. Patrick Monfort and co-authors looked at water quality in *Prophète Beach* in Marseilles, France and discovered that human health water quality problems are driven not mainly by upstream watershed impacts but primarily by fecal shedding from swimmers.

Dr. Patrick Monfort has offered to send his most English-fluent colleagues to talk to Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board to discuss this research.

Can we listen?



**Nature Based  
Solutions  
Success Stories:  
Growing  
Water Quality  
Conversations**

Photo by *Tourisme Marseilles*

# Nature Based Solutions Project Opportunities

A photograph of a sunset over a mountain range. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and lens flare effects. The sky is filled with soft, golden light and some clouds. The mountains in the foreground are silhouetted against the bright sky.

To create a current Nature Based Solutions Project List we need to differentiate between,

1. Project concepts
2. Projects with interested proponents
3. Projects with committed proponents

Please do not infer that projects in this discussion are in category 2 or 3 unless explicitly stated; this is an ideas conversation.

# Nature Based Solutions Project Opportunities

Support **Native Plants in a Box** project at TreePeople with Las Virgenes Municipal Water District

**Fund garden-by-garden nativescaping to conserve water and teach fire safe planting and increase water supply reliability**

Funded by grants from Supervisor Sheila Kuehl and ARLA for two years; the plan is that this will become self-sustaining.



Photo by LVMWD

# Nature Based Solutions Project Opportunities



## Calabasas Green Streets Project

# Nature Based Solutions Project Opportunities

- Support **Santa Monica Mountains Fund watershed project** to grow and replace riparian habitat where Woolsey fire burned
- Support **planting at Woolsey fire sites** to reduce sediment
- **Santa Monica Mountains Fund nursery** run by Antonio Sanchez; can be used watershed wide.
  - **Workplace Development Opportunity**
  - **DAC Opportunity**
  - **Watershed Education Opportunity for Paid Interns + Classroom Field Trips**



# Nature Based Solutions Project Opportunities

**Malibu Creek Watershed  
Ecosystem Restoration Project**

**Result of USACE Study**

**Rindge Dam + Removal of 10 (maybe 9, now)  
Upstream Fish Migration Barriers**



**And...**

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# Measure W: Open Space Acquisition + Water Quality

Photo by MRCA

## Looking for open space acquisition opportunities

- Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority
- California Department of State Parks
- National Park Service
- Westlake Village

**The pre-emptive strike approach: if we don't build on it, we aren't creating water quality problems.**

# Nature Based Solutions Project Opportunities

Potential Project:

## The Jim Morrison Creek Restoration Project

Site of former Topanga Corral, Bridge and Creek Restoration across the Street at MRCA Property

RCDSMM idea.



# **Nature Based Solutions Project Opportunities**

**Creek restoration within State Parks  
where creek has undercutting**

**Photo not available**

# Nature Based Solutions Project Opportunities

Potential project:

**Malibu Creek Restoration  
Parallel to Downtown Malibu**

Discussed many years ago; not a “live”  
project.



Photo by Watts



Photo by Watts

# Nature Based Solutions Project Opportunities

Potential project:

**Headwaters of Topanga  
Creek**

Would suggest as an MRCA  
or an RCDSMM project.

# Nature Based Solutions Project Opportunities

Potential project:

**Potential Creek Restoration in Lake Lindero Golf Course**

No discussions underway.



Photo by  
Greenskeeper.org

# Nature Based Solutions Project Opportunities

California Department State Parks,  
National Park Service and MRCA

**Potential creek restoration project at  
King Gillette Ranch where pond is.**

Discussion from past years;  
Project not alive currently.



Photo by MRCA

# Nature Based Solutions Project Opportunities: Idea Suggested at South Santa Monica Bay Watershed Tour on Saturday

Danielle Marquez, Board of Directors, Willows Preserve  
**Suggesting Dominguez Channel  
Creek Restoration Project**





# Measure W Revenue Stream for Stream Restoration and Other Natural Solutions

- protecting undeveloped mountains and floodplains
- creating and restoring riparian habitat and wetlands

With few exceptions, scoring system is not allowing projects that fit these definitions to win.

**Many voters thought Measure W would help support nature.**

**Is 2023 the year to change the system to allow nature to win?**

# SO MUCH ADDITIONAL FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS...

From the California Legislative Analyst's Office, 2022:

*“The 2022-23 budget package provides a total of **\$23.7 billion** from various fund sources—the General Fund, bond funds, and a number of special funds—for programs administered by the California Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Agencies.*

- California Coastal Commission, \$715 million over the next 2 years
- Wildlife Conservation Board, \$853 million over the next 2 years
- Federal BiPartisan Infrastructure – a ½ a Billion for L.A. County, a billion??

# California 2020-2023 Natural Resources Agency Funding

## Natural Resources Budget Summary

*(Dollars in Millions)*

	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Estimated	2022-23 Enacted	Change From 2021-22	
				Amount	Percent
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$11,088</b>	<b>\$20,481</b>	<b>\$16,239</b>	<b>-\$4,243</b>	<b>-21%</b>
<b>By Department</b>					
Water Resources <sup>a</sup>	\$4,020	\$6,986	\$4,359	-\$2,628	-38%
Forestry and Fire Protection	2,132	3,382	3,401	19	1
General obligation bond debt service	1,296	1,289	1,268	-21	-2
Parks and Recreation	1,260	1,899	1,480	-418	-22
Energy Commission	740	2,938	1,450	-1,488	-51
Fish and Wildlife	450	1,059	890	-168	-16
Wildlife Conservation Board	329	374	853	478	128
Conservation	163	429	337	-92	-21
Conservation Corps	155	174	279	106	61
Natural Resources Agency	87	835	704	-131	-16
Coastal Conservancy	74	156	715	559	358
State Lands Commission	51	356	51	-305	-86
Other resources programs <sup>b</sup>	4,351	604	451	-153	-25

**Nature  
Based  
Solutions  
are a part  
of our  
cultural  
DNA in the  
Santa  
Monica  
Mountains.**

**Biodiversity  
's nature.**



Photo by State Parks