



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

L.A. River Rover

March 2014

Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership

Los Angeles, California

THE PARTNERSHIP

Bringing People to the River and the River to the People

The River Rover will be a mobile interactive education center focusing on the past, present and future of the Los Angeles River



urban wildlife refuge PARTNERSHIP

The Los Angeles River once meandered through wetlands and marshes, providing habitat for steelhead and grizzly bears. Since the late 1930's, 80% of the Los Angeles River has been paved. With the cement came a perceptual shift. The once natural river became a no-man's land surrounded by fences and signs.

Due to the Friends of the Los Angeles River's efforts, public perception is changing and the communities around the river are learning about this unique area.

The River Rover, a mobile visitor and education center, was selected as one of eight partnerships in the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership program. The River Rover provides opportunities to educate families and children in one of the most diverse and densely populated regions of the country. The ability to "Bring the River to the People" allows us to engage with an audience who may not be comfortable going to the River on their own or even unsure about how to get there. Through school visits and community outreach events, students and





families will be able to learn about the past, present and future of the Los Angeles River. Exhibits inside the River Rover will describe the history of the river, the value that it has for wildlife, and the opportunity for the communities around the river to enjoy its parks, kayak down the river, and connect to nature in a very urban setting.

The L.A. River Rover Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership is joined by these 7 other Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnerships:

- New Haven (New Haven, CT)**
- Forest Preserves of Cook County (Chicago, IL)**
- Houston (Houston, TX)**
- Providence Parks (Providence, RI)**
- Lake Sammamish (Seattle, WA)**
- Masonville Cove (Baltimore, MD)**
- Valle de Oro (Albuquerque, NM)**

From the suburbs of the San Fernando Valley to the Pacific Ocean in Long Beach, the Los Angeles River flows through 14 cities and countless neighborhoods with approximately 9 million residents. The River Rover is a unique opportunity to engage diverse communities and highlight the value of the Los Angeles River as a refuge for urban residents.

IMPLEMENTATION OF *CONSERVING THE FUTURE*

The Service's vision for the National Wildlife Refuge System, entitled *Conserving the Future*, proposes in Recommendation 13 an Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative that will increase the Service's relevancy to urban citizens. This initiative will establish measures to help define and achieve excellence, create a framework for creating new urban partnerships, and establish a refuge presence in ten demographically and geographically varied cities in the U.S.

MORE INFORMATION

www.fws.gov/refuges/vision/urbanwildliferefugeinitiative

