



District Academic Senate Sustainability Institute

Fall, 2016 Newsletter

October 26, 2016

Volume 2, Number 3

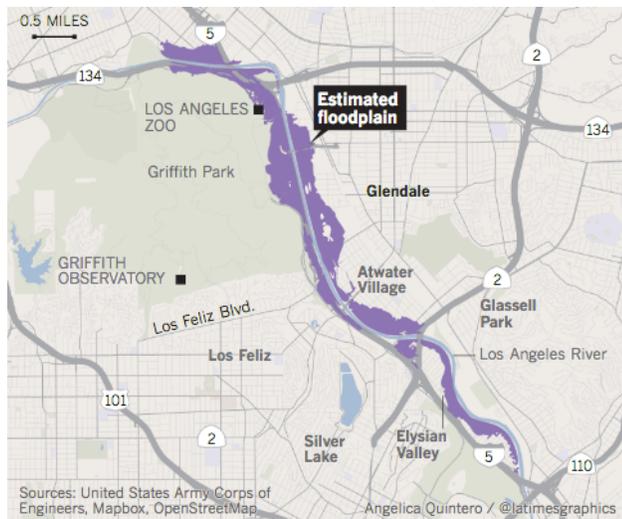
In this issue the SI reports:

- USACE and the Revitalization of the LA River
- SI moving forward with the DHLI grant for producing classroom teaching modules
- Election and the Environmental Agenda
- Cabrillo Aquarium Teacher Workshops
- LADWP to present talk at Valley College on San Fernando Valley groundwater resources
- Faculty Advisory Committee forming to guide the LACCD membership with the SCMI
- November 5th talk on water at LACC

* * *

USACE and the Revitalization of the LA River

The US Army Corps of Engineers has released the culmination of years of study on the environmental impacts of L.A.'s ambitious plans to revitalize the urban waterway. The news is not good for the project. A recent [LA Times article \(Oct 17\)](#) examines the final release of the report which is required since the USACE uses the LA River as a flood control system. ([FINAL Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report](#)).



At the center of the LA Times article is that “(a) new U.S. Army Corps of Engineers report found that more than 3,000 parcels north of downtown Los Angeles in neighborhoods such as Atwater Village and Elysian Valley could be submerged by an average of 5 to 10 feet of water in the event of a 100-year storm.” This calculation is based on more accurate mapping, which expanded the potential impact to more than three thousand parcels from the original 870 identified in earlier studies.

The floodplain marked in purple is the highest risk area for a “100 year flood”, which means a 1% chance of occurring along the 11-mile stretch of the river. But this is the area most slated for revitalization. The Corps estimates that property owners with federally backed mortgages will have to buy flood insurance. This could potentially cause the LA River revitalization to scale back the plans for restoring natural features to the concrete flood channel that is the reality of the river today. It might also slow down the land grab that has been taking place as speculators and developers eye the project as a new opportunity for high-end residence and commercial neighborhoods.

For more on the USACE report on the LA River you can attend a public meeting scheduled by the Corps for November 7. The topics and location are:

Station Topics:

- Flood risk management strategies specific to the Los Angeles River
- Non-native vegetation removal activities and processes
- Hydraulic conditions in the river, including barrier function
- General Los Angeles County Drainage Area Operations and Maintenance program, budgeting, and schedule
- River access
- Trash and debris removal volunteer opportunities
- Corps 101

Date: November 7, 2016 **Time:** 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. **Location:** Friendship Auditorium, 3201 Riverside Drive, Los Angeles, California 90027

SI moving forward with the DHLI grant for producing classroom teaching modules

Thanks to a grant from the [Dolores Huerta Labor Institute](#), the SI is moving on with the production of two classroom-teaching modules on labor and the green economy. Two consultants with broad experience in the green economy and environmental education have been hired to complete the work. We are happy to have the participation of [Laurie Kaye Nijaki](#) and [Robert Mejia](#) of Etherworks.

Out of the originally three proposed modules, the SI will focus on two. These are the construction trades and sustainably designed buildings, and the growing field of water conservation and efficiency. Each module will take about 20 minutes of time in a multimedia presentation based on a PowerPoint platform. The modules will fit into a wide range of courses from political and science and business to environmental studies and urban planning. These should ready toward the end of January, 2017.

Our logo: The District learning tree is embedded in the “triple bottom line” of sustainable development: social justice, political equality and environmental sustainability. The SI endorses this approach to environmental education.



Election and the Environmental Agenda

Environmentalists have much to worry about in this upcoming general election. In all the presidential and vice-presidential debating, the topic of climate change only came up once or twice meriting less than a few seconds of commentary. Perhaps the most alarming is the commitment made by Donald Trump to rip up the Paris accord on climate change (COP21) and to [double down on coal](#). But a full-throated defense of a greener agenda was not to be heard from the Democratic candidate, Hillary Clinton, despite a track record on some issues like climate. With the nation deeply divided it is not easy to see where voters stand on addressing pressing concerns. We need leadership to guide us through this period of crisis. One way to demand that leadership is to take the climate pledge at the [Climate Reality Project](#).

Cabrillo Aquarium Teacher Workshops

The [Cabrillo Marine Aquarium](#) is holding teacher workshops in December in two very interesting areas. On Saturday December 3, 1pm -4pm, the Aquarium will host a workshop on underwater remotely operated vehicles, ROVs. These will be built from PVC pipe and low cost materials at the workshop. The workshop is free but you must RSVP at teacher.workshop@cmaqua.org or call 310-548-7562. No experience is necessary.

The second is *Tidepools for Teachers* on Saturday December 10, 10am to 1pm at the Point Fermin tidepools. The workshop will focus on bringing tidepools into the classroom and also requires an RSVP. Write e-mail to the above address or call the above number to reserve your place.

LADWP to present talk at Valley College on San Fernando Valley groundwater resources

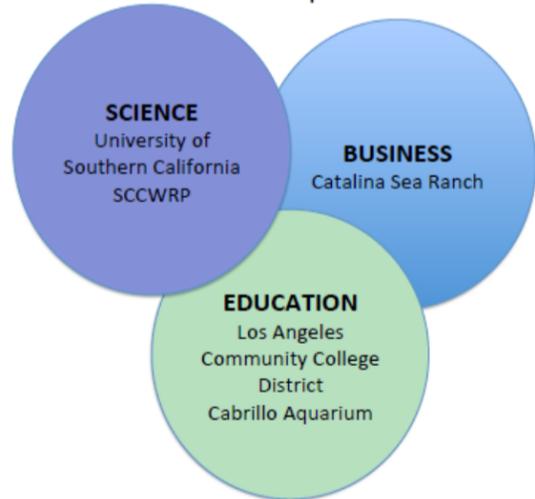
After a successful presentation at Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian’s Fourth Water Summit at LAVC September 23, the LADWP’s **Evelyn Cortez-Davis** has agreed to talk to some Earth Science classes at the college on November 1st at 7pm at the Fireside Lounge in Monarch Hall. The two-hour talk and discussion will focus on the groundwater resources of the San Fernando Valley as these are required to meet future needs, and as the alternative to deliveries from the shrinking Colorado River and Owens Valley sources as well as the State Water Project. Ms. Cortez-Davis is an expert in groundwater management and will address such issues as aquifer recharge, toxic contamination, and remediation of brownfields. The event is partially sponsored by the Earth Sciences Dept. at Valley.

Faculty Advisory Committee forming to guide the LACCD membership in the SCMI

We are happy to report that we have had some replies to our request for interested faculty members to form an advisory committee to guide the LACCD. The first meeting will be scheduled for mid November and the invitation to participate remains open to all fulltime and adjunct professors.

The SCMI offers us an unprecedented access to the urban coastal zone, but also to be part of the growth plans at AltaSea. A recent AltaSea document shows the importance of our role.

AltaSea Brings Together
To Promote Sustainable Aquaculture Solutions



Our annual membership fee for the SCMI is quite modest and gets us a seat at the table in a consortium of institutions of higher learning that make up the SCMI. We are the only community college district that is a member of the SCMI. We have six or seven faculty who are interested in the advisory committee. If you are interested do not hesitate to write to George Leddy, leddygs@lavc.edu.

LACC hosts the LA Geographical Society talk on the political ecology of water:

The complex politics of water allocation in California gets an insightful look in a talk offered by the [LA Geographical Society](#) on *The Political Ecology of Water: Restrictions in California Cities*. The talk will be given by Dr. Kris Bezdecny of Cal State Los Angeles. Dr. Bezdecny is an assistant professor in the Geography Dept. at CSULA. The talk starts at 10AM at the LACC Science Building on Vermont Ave.