



## **SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**

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For Immediate Release  
November 13, 2013

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### **Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, State and Local Officials, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority Dedicate New, State-of-the Art Natural Park alongside Compton Creek**

*Compton Creek Natural Park at George Washington Elementary will connect community to Compton Creek, and provide environmental education opportunities for schoolchildren*

Compton, California November 13, 2013—At a dedication ceremony attended by more than a hundred school children and featuring the Dominguez High School marching band, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, in partnership with Compton Unified School District and the Los Angeles Conservation Corps (LACC), announced today that a beautiful and innovative new park has opened along Compton Creek in the City of Compton.

“The City of Compton was originally settled next to the free-flowing Compton Creek,” said Joseph T. Edmiston, Executive Director of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. “Now the creek will bring nature back and connect the community with it and will expand recreational opportunities.”

“In Los Angeles County, we don’t often have the privilege of adding three acres of green space to a community, said Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. “But this week, we have the honor of inaugurating the three-acre Compton Creek Natural Park at George Washington Elementary School, an important step in implementing the Compton Creek Garden Master Plan. That plan lays out a vision for a 3.75 mile-long park system of gardens, plazas, trails, habitats and outdoor classrooms to transform Compton Creek into a usable outdoor space. With this effort, our communities are well on their way to becoming cleaner, greener and healthier. “

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The newly created **Compton Creek Natural Park at George Washington Elementary School** is adjacent to the creek and the 3.3 mile Compton Creek Bike Path. The more than three-acre park was built on an underutilized portion of the 400-student elementary school, although it is wholly separated from the campus. Designed through a collaborative process with teachers, school staff, community members, and other stakeholders, the new park features some of the natural habitat and plant communities found in the Compton Creek watershed, shade trees, walking paths, grassy areas, fitness equipment, picnic and seating areas, a multi-use amphitheater, parking, a community plaza, and interpretive signage.

In addition, the sustainably designed park includes environmentally friendly features such as natural retention basins and bioswales for stormwater treatment, and a 127,000 gallon underground cistern which will store rainwater to irrigate the park. The Creekside Park will provide habitat for local and migratory birds, and an environmental learning area for the adjacent school.

The MRCA worked with the school not only to develop an attractive natural play space, but to create an environmental learning opportunity as well. At the event the MRCA announced that it will sponsor the entire fifth grade class of George Washington Elementary students at its environmental education overnight camp in the Santa Monica Mountains, as it has for several years in the past. The MRCA also works with the school on local environmental programs and with its recreational transit program continues to sponsor day trips into local mountains for families.

Funded with grants from Los Angeles County Proposition A, and Supervisor Mark Ridley Thomas, and state bond funds approved by the voters (Propositions 84 and 12), the park is a successful example of State, local, and nonprofit partnership and collaboration. Funding partners include the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the State Coastal Conservancy, the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, and the California Natural Resources Agency River Parkways Program.

The park was constructed by the Los Angeles Conservation Corps (LACC), a youth job training nonprofit. The park will be maintained by LACC. Future phases of the park will include a work center for LACC youth, public restrooms, and more recreational amenities.

The natural park is the first to fulfill the vision of the 2007 Compton Creek Garden Master Plan, which seeks to create a 3.75 mile-long park system of gardens, plazas,

trails, habitats, outdoor classrooms, promenades, and innovative stormwater management solutions to reinvigorate Compton Creek while created badly needed park space in the City of Compton.

Compton Creek is the longest tributary of the lower Los Angeles River and drains a 42.1-square-mile industrial and residential area in the Los Angeles basin. The 8.5 mile long creek flows through an alluvial plain, which originally included wetlands, marshlands, lakes, and streams that flowed into the Pacific Ocean. The natural course and appearance of the creek was altered in 1939 when the Army Corps of Engineers encased the creek in a concrete channel to convey storm water as a flood control measure. While largely ignored and neglected for many years, since 1996, elected officials, public agencies, and many other organizations have joined together in the Compton Creek Task Force to clean up Compton Creek and provide a forum to change the Creek's role in the community.

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy was established by the California State Legislature in 1980. Since that time, it has helped to preserve over 69,000 acres of parkland in both wilderness and urban settings, and has improved more than hundreds of public recreational facilities throughout Southern California.

The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority is a local public park agency dedicated to the preservation and management of open space, urban parkland, watershed lands, trails, and wildlife habitat. The MRCA manages more than 69,000 acres of public parkland and provides natural resources and scientific expertise, critical regional planning services, operations, fire prevention and ranger services, as well as education and leadership programs for thousands of youth each year. It is one of the lead agencies revitalizing the Los Angeles River and its tributaries, including Compton Creek.

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